

BRITISH & FOREIGN LIBRARY

 OLD BOND STREET
 EBERS,
 BOOKSELLER & STATIONER
 No. 23.
 Visiting & other Cards neatly Engraved & Printed.

J. Ebers
 Bookseller, Stationer, Printer,
 & BOOKBINDER,
At his Circulating Library,
No. 23,
OLD BOND STREET,
2 Doors from Burlington Gardens.
 Books Bought, Sold or Exchanged.
Newspapers & all periodical Publications
regularly served in Town or Country.
Tickets for all the Fashionable Places of Amusement.
 Copper Plates neatly Engraved & Printed.

3792

EBERS'S

British & Foreign

CIRCULATING

LIBRARY.

(27.)
OLD BOND STREET.

To be returned as soon as possible

3

4971 N 2724

THE
RIVAL MOTHERS,
OR
CALUMNY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
OF
MADAME DE GENLIS.

Virtue and Patience have at length unravell'd
The knots which Fortune tied.

DRYDEN.

*Depuis que je suis né, j'ai vu la calomnie
Exhaler les venins de sa bouche imbuë.*

VOLTAIRE's *Tancrède*

IN FOUR VOLUMES.
VOL. III.

LONDON:

Printed by A. Strahan, Printers-Street, for

T. N. LONGMAN AND O. REES, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1800.

THE

1871

11

1871



IN THE

1871

1871

1871

1871

THE
RIVAL MOTHERS.

LETTER I.

From the COUNTESS D'ERNEVILLE *to the*
MARQUIS.

Dijon, Feb. 18.

ALL my *clandestine* letters are short. This will be the shorter, as I write by the same messenger a *double letter* for you and Pauline.

But I must talk to you about Stephen; this is the eighth day of his having the measles, and he is perfectly well. He got up yesterday, and to-day he is playing about in high spirits. He is an amiable,
VOL. III. B tractable,

tractable, and quick child; and I even think that he is like you. He has not your features; although he is pretty, his face will never be so expressive as yours: but, in his manners and his looks, he bears a great resemblance to you. To-day he is *seven* years old! Ah! let us always bewail his birth; but let us bring him up properly: this is a very sacred duty. I have already formed some projects for him; it would be very possible to marry him one day to Léocadie: in this match I see but one impropriety; it is, that the children are precisely of the same age. Stephen ought to be a few years older. Adieu, my dear son; I shall write to you again on Thursday to let you know how your child is.

LETTER II.

The MARQUIS's Answer.

Feb. 24.

STEPHEN marry Léocadie! Ah, my dear mother! you are little acquainted with Pauline's fondness for Léocadie, and the ambitious views she forms for her! Besides, the person who so constantly thinks of that child, and who sends her, every year, presents so rich and so curious, this *person* would certainly oppose such an alliance. No, no; my poor Stephen, forgotten, abandoned by his mother, will certainly not have the romantic and brilliant destiny of Léocadie! I myself think that this last child appears born for something extraordinary. The lustre of her beauty, her graces, her dispositions, and the edu-

cation she receives, will one day make her one of the most charming and most distinguished of women. Pauline exists and breathes but for her. You have no idea of this attachment. Maurice and Sylvestre are loved ; but what a difference ! Léocadie costs us all dear.

Adieu, my dear mother. I will come and see you, thank you for your incomparable kindness, and console myself in your company, as soon as I have settled some affairs which detain me here.

LETTER III.

*Anonymous, addressed to the MARCHIONESS
D'ERNEVILLE.*

May 28.

MADAM; there is such a sympathy between you and the happy and faithful husband whom you have chosen, that I find in your actions the conformity that I admire in your sentiments.

While you, in the month of February 17**, were adopting a pretty little girl, your husband, on his part, at the same period, also *adopted* a child. The charming Léocadie was found in a closet: it is said that Stephen was found in a trunk at the moment when the Marquis was packing up, in order to join you. This child is brought up, at Dijon, by your respect-

able mother, the illustrious confidant of the virtuous secrets of her *adopted* son.

This taste for adoption, for which your family is distinguished, produces adventures so wonderful and so interesting, that I wish to transmit them to posterity. In consequence, I am composing a romance of eighteen stanzas on the miraculous birth of Léocadie and of Stephen. I shall have the honour, Madam, to send you the first copy.

LETTER IV.

*From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS
DE VORDAC.*

Erneville, June 5.

MY God! what have I done to excite so much hatred? Ah, my dear friend! if you knew the vexations that I undergo! Anonymous letters the most infamous, the most insulting! How painful it is to inspire that frightful sentiment when we have in the heart nothing but benevolence! O! how shocking is injustice! Though for upwards of seven years I have experienced such cruelties from it, I am not yet accustomed to them!

What clamour against me, and what indulgence for so many people, who, join-
B 4 ing

ing vice to effrontery and scandal, far from concealing their intrigues, acknowledge them, and even take a pride in them! But, after all, injustice is perhaps a blessing; for when it afflicts us without souring our temper, it must improve the disposition; it cures us of vanity, it recalls us to God. Alas! but for this sublime idea, what would become of us when we are oppressed by calumny? Friendship even is then no longer a certain refuge. If it be generous enough not to belie itself, is it always sufficiently clear-sighted not to suffer itself to be secretly misled by false appearances, and to constantly repel universal prepossessions? Thus, the sweetest testimonies of its esteem become suspicious; and, losing almost all their value, no longer appear any thing but the effects of compassion and toleration.

There is nothing beautiful, nothing real, without an end, and without utility. Virtue called in question, persecuted and ever per-

persevering, would be no more than an inconceivable madness, were it entirely deprived of consolation and hope. The testimony of conscience would then serve only to irritate us deeply, and to make us misanthropes. To indemnify ourselves for unjust contempt, we should endeavour to exaggerate to ourselves our own virtues; to revenge ourselves, and to be justified in hating mankind, we should end by deifying ourselves; we should become monsters of pride, and thus it is that we should be corrupted by the very sentiment which should lead us towards good, and make us detest vice and iniquity. And this is what has produced that gloomy misanthropy which buries itself in the heart of the deserts.

But, with *a witness*, we enjoy our innocence; and what witness! the supreme judge of our actions! he who can alone appreciate and reward them! O! how

sweet and consoling it is to apply to him, to take refuge in his paternal bosom, and there, to wait in peace for the accomplishment of his promises !

No, my dear friend ; I have not yet seen the child that my mother has taken under her care ; but she has mentioned him to me in her letters, and I applaud this good action added to so many others of the same kind. I shall go this autumn to Dijon, and pass there, I believe, part of the winter. Adieu, my friend ; I am no longer happy ; but I am resigned.

LETTER V.

From the COUNTESS to the MARQUIS.

Dijon, October 29.

I AM very glad, my dear Albert, that you have found a probable pretext for remaining at Erneville, and that you were not present at the first interview between Pauline and Stephen. Pauline examined this child with an attentive, thoughtful, and inquisitive air, which particularly struck me. Then she caressed him exceedingly. This morning she went out early, merely to buy him some playthings. Feeling and gentle creature! has she any suspicions? I do not believe it however; nothing in her conversation can lead to this idea, and she resumed a perfectly natural manner.

Léocadie is, in fact, an enchanting child; it is impossible not to love her extravagantly. There is nothing astonishing in Pauline's affection; any other person would experience the same in her place.

Now come, dear Albert; a longer stay at Erneville would appear extraordinary, and afflict Pauline.

LETTER VI.

From the BARONESS DE VORDAC *to*
MONSIEUR DU RESNEL.

January 6.

AH! Sir, you have so many friends at Dijon; write, exert yourself to stop, if possible, the most infamous libel against our friends! An abominable pamphlet containing a song in *eighteen stanzas*, on

Pauline

Pauline and her husband, with long notes full of execrable calumnies !

This morning the Baroness received, by the post, a copy of this villainous production. Interesting and tender-hearted Pauline ! O ! how dear do thy talents, thy genius, and thy graces cost thee ! While your sister-in-law can, with impunity, display the most scandalous coquetry. No songs are made on her ; she is not hated ! O ! come and see us ! What shall we do ? What shall we oppose to these horrible plots of malice ? Ought and can friendship remain idle, when hatred is so active ? Come ; I want to lament with you ; I want to bewail my dear Pauline with a real friend !

LETTER VII.

From MONSIEUR D'ORGEVAL *to the*
CHEVALIER DE CELTAS.

January 20.

A MAN does not set up for a *Marquis* with impunity, my dear Chevalier; if the great Albert had contented himself with the plain name of my father, if he had been pleased to remain the *equal* of his brother, if he had married a woman without any pretensions, like my Denise, he would not be the butt of all the scoffers, the clumsy wits of the province. Figure to yourself, that there has just been made against him and his wife a satirical romance in eighteen stanzas, which contains the *true* history of the little female bastard, and which, moreover, reveals that of the
 little

little *Stephen* whom the Countess is bringing up. The song is dreadfully severe; the Baron thinks it detestable; a great many other persons judge differently; as for me, it appears to me rather indifferent. I would wish to have your opinion of it: I therefore send it to you; but do not shew it to any one: tell me whether it has circulated in your neighbourhood. This will throw an indelible ridicule on the brilliant castle of Erneville. I am very much concerned to see my brother lampooned in this manner. You, who know the country, can represent to yourself the effect which this song produces at Bourbon and at Luzi, and the *fine sport* that is made of it at the houses of the first people.

Adieu, my dear fellow; Denise desires to be remembered to you, and I embrace you.

LETTER VIII.

The CHEVALIER's Answer.

Autun, January 27.

I KNOW the song, my dear d'Orgeval ; it is here in every one's hands ; and, unfortunately, people are mad after it ; for it is a masterly performance. It is impossible that, with the *penetration* which you possess, you can have thought it *indifferent*. However, it is thus that you ought to speak of a satirical production against your brother. And myself, I do not take the liberty of saying, in the fashionable world, what I think of it. But, between ourselves, it is a master-piece. Yet I by no means approve of this species of writing. Every thing, that bears the
smallest

smallest resemblance to malice, displeases me. How can you quote the opinion of the Baron? That atrabilious man is fallen into a real state of imbecility within these two years.

Adieu, my dear fellow; I feel how much all this must affect you; *to blush for our neighbours* is a great misfortune; and I assure you that I pity you sincerely for having relations so little worthy of you.

LETTER IX.

From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS.

March 2.

I EASILY divine, my affectionate and dear friend, whence your misanthropy arises. I know, by an anonymous letter, that a libel has been made on me; and you have,

no

no doubt, discovered this fresh act of malice. I received, by the post, about three weeks ago, a large packet, the direction was in an unknown hand; I suspected that it was a libel, and I left it on my table without opening it. A moment after, Albert stepped in; and he became confused on casting his eyes on this packet, (I suppose that he had just received a similar one.) I seemed not to remark his emotion; and I said to him, carelessly, that I begged him to open this large packet, because I imagined that it was for him, and that a mistake had been made in writing the direction. Albert hastily seized hold of the packet; he went and opened it in the recess of a window; he then put it in his pocket, saying to me that, indeed, these papers were for him. Thus I have never set my eyes on this libel; and, by this little artifice, Albert knows that I have not read it. He even thinks that I am entirely ignorant of this
new

new atrocity, and this is what I particularly wished. If, by chance, he mentions it to you, confirm him well in this idea. I observe on this point, with my mother, the same dissimulation.

At the expiration of so many years to see these odious calumnies revived, and with such an increase of rage! Console yourself, my friend, in reflecting that I have made up my mind respecting all these enormities; to enjoy life, we ought not to have it in our power to acquire any profound knowledge of mankind; this would be to remain always young. It is the chimerical hopes and the sweet security produced by ignorance, that constitute the real charm of youth. O! how old am I grown in the space of eight years!

LETTER X.

From the VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN *to*
MONSIEUR DU RESNEL.

Dieppe, September 12.

Do not be alarmed, my friend, at seeing this scarcely legible writing; I am in perfect health; but I have just experienced such emotions that, after two hours' rest, I am still agitated by an universal trembling!

I wish to leave you all the pleasure of surprise; therefore I shall, without any preamble, relate to you this astonishing adventure.

Yesterday I supped in Paris, and to-day I am at Dieppe. The supper was at
Madame

Madame de * * *, with a very small party. At midnight, we took it into our heads to talk of *sea voyages*. Madame de * * * and her sister, who had never seen the sea, proposed to us a trip to Dieppe; and it was decided that we should set out immediately. Post-horses were sent for, and we set off at two in the morning, Madame de * * *, her sister, her husband, and myself. At six o'clock our carriage broke down and was overturned. Monsieur de * * * was severely hurt in the leg; the ladies fainted with fright; and this accident delayed us for some hours. We arrived to day at Dieppe at five o'clock in the afternoon. My fellow travellers, being much fatigued, immediately retired to their chambers, with the intention of resting themselves till supper time. As for me, I went to take a walk by the water-side, in order to contemplate, from the jetty,

jetty *, the most terrible storm that I ever saw in my life. The air was excessive hot; but the wind was impetuous.

On approaching the jetty, I saw an immense number of people on the beach, and I learnt that a small vessel, containing a few persons, had been overset; but that two men standing on the shore, having darted into the sea, had saved the unfortunate sufferers.

Affected by this account, I made my way through the crowd; and at the moment when I reached the sea-side, I saw two young women brought out of the water. Their deliverers (who were two sailors) laid them on the beach, saying that one of them was quite gone. I cast my eyes on this melancholy object, and I

* At Dieppe, this is the place, of all others, by the water-side, whence is discovered the greatest extent of sea.

saw an angelic face, which, in fact, appeared deprived of life ! The other young woman had fainted and was in a dreadful situation ; but her groans at least proved that she was alive. My heart was extremely moved ; I gave money to the sailors, ordering them to take up these unfortunate females, and carry them to the best surgeon's in the town, who luckily lives by the water-side. This man, who is very skilful, was at home ; he received into his own room her who gave no signs of life ; he called his maid-servants, and told me to leave him for a quarter of an hour, because he was going to have her undressed, and placed before the fire in some blankets. The other young girl was carried into the apartment of the doctor's wife, who immediately put her into her own bed.

An inexpressible sentiment of compassion inspired me with the most lively desire to know if the *shipwrecked belle* could be

be restored to life. In the course of a few minutes the surgeon sent for me. I entered his room with a violent palpitation of the heart. "Well!" said I trembling!—"Well!" rejoined he, "she is not dead; and I hope that we shall be able to save her; but the question is to recall quickly the air into her lungs. The sailors," continued he, "have remained at my door: is there one of them healthy and strong, that you could prevail on, for money, to perform the operation which I am going to direct, and which consists in blowing into the mouth of this unfortunate girl, with a strength and a perseverance that require a sort of courage and a great share of humanity?" "Ah! let me be the man employed!" exclaimed I. At these words he took me to his patient, who was still without sense or motion, wrapped up in clean blankets, and laid before the fire. Her youth and her perfect beauty added

added to the shock occasioned by her terrifying immobility and the paleness which covered her face, and which the lustre of her hair, blacker than ebony, rendered still more striking. This affecting object, surrounded by the shades of death, could, in such a situation, inspire none but the purest of sentiments ! And, at that moment, her lover even could not have profaned her innocence by pressing her against his bosom, and applying his mouth to her icy lips.

Guided by the doctor, I did every thing that he prescribed to me. At the end of a quarter of an hour, the fair stranger appeared to breathe ; a pale carnation was spread over her cheeks ; and, a few minutes after, her eyes opened ! Ah, my friend ! a father having seen his child in the most imminent danger, and snatched him from the arms of death, could not experience a more delightful sensation than that which penetrated me at this mo-

ment! Yes, I forgot her sex and her beauty, and the sentiment that filled my heart was a sentiment truly paternal! But the most painful impression rapidly succeeded it. The stranger recovering her senses by halves, shuddered on seeing herself in the arms of a man. She pushed me away with fright, and, chilled with terror, her eyes closed again. The surgeon assured me that she was out of danger, and begged me to leave the room.

I went into an adjoining apartment. At the expiration of half an hour; the doctor came to look for me again, and told me that he would be answerable for her life; but that she was delirious, although she had no fever. I was still questioning him, when the door of the room opened, and we saw the other young woman appear half dressed, with her hair in disorder, and her looks wild. She advanced towards us, and joining her hands with a suppliant air: "O! let me
" see

"see her!" said she to us, in a sobbing voice. A torrent of tears interrupted her speech. "Dispel your fears," said I to her, "your friend is out of danger." At these words this young woman fell on her knees, lifting up her arms towards heaven. She forgot the witnesses who were contemplating her; she thought herself alone with the Supreme Being, whom she invoked and thanked; she mentally offered up a prayer, the eloquent fervour of which being painted in her face with the most affecting energy, communicated to my soul all the movements of hers. I partook the transports of her joy and gratitude, and my tears involuntarily flowed.

At that moment we heard a great noise on the staircase. The surgeon went out; and we saw three servants, whose livery I recognized with emotion, and who all cried at once, "*Where is the Countess?*"

..... "Whom are you looking for?" said I to them.—"Our mistress, the Countess de Rosmond."—Yes, my friend, it is she; it is Madame de Rosmond, whom I have seen for the first time only to regret her and to weep over her!..... It is she, the first sight of whom was to inspire me with a tender interest devoid of hope, an admiration mingled with pain!..... Fatal omens!.....

While I was questioning the servants, the surgeon re-entered the room; he there found *Agnes*, that is the name of the young woman of whom I have just spoken; he related to her what I had done for her friend, and told her who I was (for he had asked me my name). When he had finished this account, *Agnes* quitted him without saying a word, and I saw her run towards me with open arms; she seized my hands, which she pressed strongly in hers: "O! how happy would you be," said she, "if you knew what an angel
"you

“you have saved!”—“Ah!” rejoined I, “you need not explain to me how much she deserves to be loved!”—“Nothing,” interrupted Agnes, “nothing can give you an idea of her; you must be acquainted with her, and I am sure that she will admit her deliverer.”

Agnes conjured me to have her shewn into the Countess’s chamber, and she made me promise to wait for her in the drawing-room, that she might speak to me again. She returned in a quarter of an hour; she was bathed with tears, the Countess’s delirium penetrated her with fright; however, the surgeon calmed her grief, by assuring her that there was nothing dangerous in this situation, and that the Countess would recover her senses after a few hours’ rest, and when she had had a good sleep.

Agnes, as ingenuous, as communicate, as she was tender-hearted, consulted me respecting what she was to do. The

Countess's country seat is near the town of Eu, twelve miles from Dieppe. It is impossible to think of carrying her thither at this moment; she cannot be better than at the surgeon's who attends her, and whose house is large and commodious. It was therefore agreed that she should remain here a few days. Before I quitted Agnes and the surgeon, I begged them not to mention to any person the sort of service that I had rendered to the Countess, as I am very certain that this story would be related in a thousand different ways, and would not fail to be turned into ridicule by malicious people.

I returned to our inn at three quarters past eight; my fellow-travellers already knew, but in a vague manner, the history of the shipwreck; they asked me many questions concerning Madame de Rosmond; I answered very negligently, assuring them that I had scarcely seen her, and that I had remained so long at the surgeon's

surgeon's only to wait till the shower of rain was over. How long and tiresome did the supper appear to me! Yet nothing was talked of but the Countess de Rosmond; though it was to ridicule what was called her *savage shyness*, and even her taste for study, and, in short, to calumniate her! How malicious and detestable did I think Madame de * * * and her sister, who, till now, have appeared to me so amiable! In order to conceal my ill humour, I complained of a violent headach, and a great inclination for sleep. I went and shut myself into my room, on-rising from table; and, instead of going to bed, I sat down to write to you. . . . It is two o'clock in the morning. This letter will go at seven; but I shall write to you again to-morrow evening and every following day; for I shall find a pretext for remaining here a week at least.

LETTER XI.

From the same to the same.

Dijon, Sept. 14.

I WAS so agitated, so taken up yesterday, that it was out of my power to write to you. I am happily rid of my fellow-travellers who set off this morning at ten o'clock. I found an excellent pretext for remaining. The Duke de P****, who is at the town of Eu, having heard, I know not by what means, that I was here, sent to me yesterday a page with a letter, in which he told me that he wished to speak to me respecting an affair that particularly concerned the Prince to whose household I belong. I shewed this note to Madame de****, declaring to her that I staid behind, because I could not dispense with

with going the next morning to Eu, and with passing several days there. This reason was considered as very valid and very natural; and, in this manner, I am to remain here a fortnight, without even giving any umbrage to any one at *** palace.

I rose yesterday with the day, while every one in the inn was still asleep; I ran to the surgeon's, where I found the interesting Agnes, who had not gone to bed, in order that she might sit up with her friend. She told me that the Countess was exactly in the same state, and to-day again she has no fever, but is still delirious. The surgeon declares to us that we ought not to have any sort of uneasiness; but the situation in which I see her makes me truly uneasy. A powerful tie attaches me to her! I have had the happiness to contribute in saving her life; I can even say, without a figure, that she is indebted to me for *the air she breathes*; her existence

is my *creation*. I cannot express what this idea inspires me with; but I protest to you that I feel for her no more than a fatherly affection: it seems to me that any *other sentiment* would profane what I have done for her! Besides, Poligni is my friend; he adores her, and with a constancy the more affecting as he has never had any hope; he has confided to me his passion; I have known all its progress and all its violence; I will never betray friendship! Accordingly, I have written to Poligni to relate to him, with sincerity, all this adventure. I am very certain that he will not divulge the *particulars* which I wish to conceal; I rely, in this respect, on his delicacy, and even on his jealousy. O! how much he will envy me!

I owed to the entire confidence which he has shewn me for several years, to disguise nothing from him relative to the object on which his thoughts are solely employed; in short, I assure him that if

the Countess admits me to her house, I will take every pains to destroy the prepossessions which she has taken against him. I have promised it, and I will keep my word.

I aspire only to the friendship of Madame de Rosmond; it will be very pleasing to me to enjoy her gratitude. Judge how painful it is to me not to be able to appear before her without exciting her terror! for it appears that her delirium is particularly occasioned by the confused recollection of the extraordinary situation in which, on opening her eyes for the first time, she saw me near her. This image has engraved on her mind an imaginary outrage. In her delirium, she frequently compares herself to *Clarissa Harlowe*, and I am *Lovelace*. As she has no fever, she is not in bed; but she passes the whole day in an easy chair: twice have I entered the room; but, unfortunately, she has retained the recollection of my face,

and no sooner does she cast her looks on me than she is agitated by convulsive movements, and I am forced to retire with precipitation. Conceive what would be my grief, if this delirium, by being prolonged, should end by impairing her organs, and if she were to preserve for ever this wildness and her error! This idea is horrid, insupportable; it is continually presenting itself to my imagination, and affects me in such a manner that nothing can drive it from my mind.

I passed part of the day with the amiable Agnes. She related to me the history of the shipwreck. Here it is: Agnes had never been at Dieppe, and her friend, through complaisance for her, came here last Monday. The next day they went by themselves to take a walk by the water-side. The weather was delightful; an old boatman proposed to them to take a trip in his little vessel, and to this they consented. The sea was then extremely calm;
and

and the Countess, long familiarized to this terrible element, (her country-seat stands by the sea-side,) wished to make a long excursion. At two leagues from the shore a storm on a sudden came on. The old boatman was out of his wits; however, he mustered up all his strength in order to regain the harbour; he reached it; but at that moment the vessel overset; and the two female friends, who had fainted, fell into the water; the boatman abandoned them, and swam away. You know the rest. The sailors, who were the deliverers of the Countess and of Agnes, have already received twenty louis from the latter, with the promise of a pension which the Countess will certainly grant them.

This, my friend, is the progress we have made. I am sure that these details will interest you warmly. It is from *principle* that I give an account of them to Poligni; but it is to you alone that I love to relate them.

LETTER XII.

From the same to the same.

Dieppe, Sept. 17.

AT last, thank heaven ! Madame de Rosmond yesterday entirely recovered her senses, and I am relieved from the frightful weight by which my heart was oppressed. I have not seen her yet since this happy change. Agnes related to her the history of her recovery, and by what means she was restored to life ; but Agnes was guilty of an imprudence in speaking to her of the delirium which had so much alarmed us ; this detail, joined to that of what I did for her, occasions her such an embarrassment, that she has not yet been able to make up her mind to receive me. I could wish that this first interview was
over ;

over ; I suffer, beforehand, from the sort of confusion which she will experience. At this moment a message is announced to me from Madame de Rosmond.

She begs me to come and see her tomorrow at noon ! A note from Agnes informs me that the Countess returns tomorrow to her country-seat, and that I shall receive an invitation to accompany her thither ! Poor Poligni ! what would he not give to be in my place ! But I will interest myself in his behalf. I know not how all this will end ; I am sure only of one thing, it is, that I shall not become a dishonest man, that I shall not become a faithless friend.

LETTER XIII.

From the same to the same.

La M * *, Sept. 17.

I WRITE to you from an abode truly enchanted. Could it be otherwise ! It is the work of the divinity who inhabits it ! It is Madame de Rosmond who has laid out its gardens. I have often been astonished that so many people make gardens in the English taste, squander immense sums to produce nothing but children's toys, or insipid imitations. Here, every thing is invented, every thing is created, every thing speaks home to the heart and to the mind. But let us talk of Madame de Rosmond : the most ingenious of her inventions will ever be inferior to herself.

Yesterday

Yesterday at half past nine I went to the surgeon's; a moment after, Madame de Rosmond, giving her arm to her friend, entered the drawing-room, where I was waiting for her. She blushed prodigiously on perceiving me; but, notwithstanding the embarrassment and the timidity with which her modesty and the singularity of her adventure naturally inspired her, she contrived to express to me the most affecting gratitude with as much grace as sensibility. On my part, I had a deportment so unaffected, manners so respectful, and a tone so *paternal*, that all her confusion was entirely dispelled in the course of a few minutes. After having invited me to set out with her, she told me that she was also going to take with her all her *other deliverers*, and as I saw there was an embarrassment respecting the arrangement of the carriages, I undertook to take in mine the doctor and the two sailors. We set out at eleven o'clock. I did not grow tired on
the

the road; I saw before us Madame de Rosmond's carriage, and we talked of nothing but of her!..... At three quarters past twelve we arrived at La M** ; the avenue was filled with villagers, who having heard of the accident that had befallen *their lady*, whom they adore, wished to see her. She stopped her carriage, alighted from it, and went on foot to the house, constantly surrounded and followed by all this multitude. The Countess, after having thanked these good people with an expression full of charms, presented us to them as her deliverers; she then invited them to return the next day to a *fête champêtre* which she intends to give them.

While we were waiting for dinner, the Countess conducted us into the gardens, which are disposed and laid out, as it were dramatically, to represent *Human Life*. On leaving the house, you traverse a vast green, at the end of which is the *Pavilion of Infancy*. This is a large saloon of an elegant form,

form, painted in fresco; and the ornaments, statues, and paintings of which represent groups of children, and all the sports of that charming age. After this pavilion, you enter a long alley, clothed with a turf enamelled with flowers; sumptuous vases of alabaster placed at the foot of all the trees, contain nothing but lilies, emblems of innocence. To the right and left of the alley, in recesses forming sorts of groves, are placed different games, the sweet amusements of adolescence—nine-pins, bowls, a swing, and in the middle of the alley is a large basin; this is a bath in the Grecian style, faced with white marble, and filled with transparent water, the image of purity. At the end of this alley, you come to two different roads, the one on the right, and the other on the left. A statue of *Truth* placed between these two roads, seems to invite you by its gesture to take the former. On the pedestal of
this

this statue are to be read the following verses :

- “ Attend, dear youth, whoe’er thou art,
“ That wander’st through this sweet recess ;
“ If innocence delight thy heart,
“ The sole true treasure men possess,
“ Reflect ; for, lo ! two paths are here ;
“ Of error, that ; of wisdom, this ;
“ Then make thy choice ; thy weakness fear ;
“ Take me for guide ; I lead to bliss.”

The entrance of the *Road of Error* is decorated by an elegant portico in lattice-work, covered with honey-suckle. This road is serpentine, but smooth and easy ; on both sides are seen boxes filled with flowers, which conceal only by halves bushes of *thorns*, nettles, and venomous plants, the real productions of the soil. . . . After having proceeded about two hundred paces, you perfectly distinguish the roaring of the sea ! and you discover the wreck of the *Palace of Inconstancy*. It
is

is not ruins ; you see it is mere caprice, and not the hand of time, that has thrown down a part of this edifice ; what remains of it is in the most modern taste ; the architecture exhibits a whimsical mixture of different styles ; on one of the large new stones dispersed on the light sand, which served as a foundation for the palace, you read these terrifying words : “ *To destroy in order to change !*” Near this, you perceive a sort of land-mark, a small truncated column placed before a very bushy clump, which represents a labyrinth, and appears full of roses ; but in the midst of which a tall cypress mournfully rears its head The statue of *Truth* again stands near this land-mark, and on its base are these verses :

“ Still there is time to measure back thy way,

“ Still, to pursue a fortunate career ;

“ Seek Virtue’s path ; and learn, that all delay

“ But hastens on the ruin that is near :

“ To

“ To crimes, alas ! a venial error leads ;

“ Then keep thy passions under strict control :

“ One false step made, a precipice succeeds,

“ And I again appear, to fright thy soul.

The Countess rightly judged that there was no necessity for exhibiting, otherwise than *in description*, the road of vice and guilt ; accordingly you do not penetrate into the formidable labyrinth ; you are forced to yield to the voice of *Truth* ; you turn back, and go in search of the road of *Virtue*. This part of the garden is infinitely more extensive than the preceding, because the allegory is here fully represented.

You first enter a straight, but narrow and rugged alley ; before you, is seen a very steep and difficult road but as you advance, it improves. You arrive at a smiling plain, intersected by rivulets ; after having gone over it, you reach the *Temple of Hope* ; this is a large
rotunda

rotunda that receives the light only through the opening of its cupola which admits of the naked sky being seen*. A beautiful piece of sculpture constitutes the whole ornament of this temple ; it is *Hope*, not on a pedestal, but rising from the bosom of a heap of clouds, and supporting *Virtue* while pointing out to her the sky ! A few paces hence, is perceived a high mountain, which appears covered with rocks and brambles ! Fortified by *Hope*, you boldly decide on climbing it : you find here no beaten path ; you must walk painfully through thorns, on slippery rocks but presently the rocks disappear ; the mountain becomes more level ; verdure and flowers again make their appearance, and the prospect, in particular, is embellished You still ascend ; you still get higher, by a pleasant, agreeable road, which is not in the least fatiguing.

* Like that of the Pantheon at Rome.

You

You perceive, in the distance, a crowd of enchanting objects! . . . At length you reach the summit of this long mountain; and there, the first object that strikes your eyes is the statue of *Virtue* represented under the emblem of *Strength*; it is Hercules seated, leaning on his club with the ancient Greek motto: *After labour rest*. . . . On the altar of *Virtue*, surrounded by laurels, and placed on a tuft of everlasting flowers, is read the following inscription :

“ For all thy persevering care,
“ The sweet reward of Virtue share;
“ And live for worth renown’d:
“ Thy ravish’d eyes behind thee cast,
“ Trace back the way that thou hast pass’d;
“ Success thy toil has crown’d.”

In fact, on turning round, you see all the road along which you have just passed; the prospect is delightful on this side; it is disposed and decorated in such a manner, that the objects which had seemed
the

the most gloomy in climbing the mountain, appear, in this point of view, the most agreeable. Hence, are discovered cascades, flowers, bushes of laurels which were masked, on the other side, by frightful rocks! From the *Altar of Virtue* a turf path leads to the *Temple of Peace*. On leaving this temple, you find yourself under a thick arch of foliage, which takes you to the *Cave of Morpheus*. This charming grotto, surrounded by poppies and roses, is situated in an island enchanting from the beauty of the shade and the water; after having passed under a bridge of remarkable lightness and elegance, you discover the grotto; the inside of it is clothed with moss; it is filled with odoriferous plants, which exhale the sweetest perfumes: a river which crosses it, falling softly on some turf, seems, by its agreeable murmur, to invite you to repose. On the

entrance of the cave is to be read this inscription :

“ Here, on the verdant turf while laid,
“ Where flow’rs perfume the cooling shade,
“ And no rude gales annoy,
“ The calm, that Virtue brings, partake;
“ Of pleasure dream; and then awake,
“ To welcome real joy.”

Beyond this island, all the rest of the garden presents a real *Elysium*, where taste, art, and nature, have assembled every thing most charming and most diversified that can be imagined.

I forgot to tell you a circumstance that leaves nothing to be wished for in regard to the justness of the general allegory; it is, that the long road of Virtue is constantly intersected by little winding cross-paths, which all lead to *the Road of Error*.

Besides these ingenious and moral pleasure-grounds, the Countess, on the other
side

side of the house, has kitchen-gardens, an orchard, and a nursery, in which she has taken the most happy advantage of mythology, and the rural customs followed by the ancients. This would require too long a description, and would please you less than the allegorical garden, which, in point of interest, can be compared only to that of Erneville, as there can be compared only *two women*, when one has had an opportunity of knowing them both: *Pauline* and *the Countess de Rosmond*! After having visited these delightful gardens, we re-entered the house, where dinner was waiting for us. The two sailors sat down with us; and, on rising from table, the Countess gave each of these worthy people an annuity-deed of six hundred livres for life.

This house, from the simple and agreeable manner in which it is laid out and arranged, extremely resembles Erneville castle; but I here remarked a singularity

that struck me very much. There is, in all the apartments, a large picture decorated with a rich frame, and covered with a gauze or silk curtain, which, being placed so as to shew the frame, entirely conceals the canvass. I observed that these mysterious pictures are all placed in front of Madame de Rosmond, in such a manner that she can always see them from the place where she generally sits. In her bed-chamber, the veiled picture is in her alcove or the recess for her bed; in her study, it is over her writing-desk.

I at first thought that these veils were put only to preserve a valuable painting; and, very anxious to know the subjects of them, I mentioned the matter to Agnes, who began laughing, telling me to go and look at them; immediately I ran to lift up the gauze, and I saw nothing but a canvass for a picture, quite plain, without any painting; and I am informed that all
the

the other apparent pictures are the same, and that they have been here for several years.

Agnes believes and assures me that this is nothing more than a mere whim of her friend, who intends to fill these frames, by purchasing one day some pictures, and who has not hitherto chosen to go to this expense. But these frames appear made for *portraits*, and not for pictures. The manner in which they are placed seems to announce a *sentiment*, and not a whim! In short, when I spoke of them before the Countess, I thought I saw a light cloud obscure her brow, and a few tears glisten in her eyes.

I have now to talk to you of her friend, that interesting Agnes, who would appear handsome, if it were possible to be so by the side of Madame de Rosmond. These two friends have for each other the most affectionate and the most exalted regard:

I am ignorant of the history which has united them ; I know only that the kindness and beneficence of the Countess formed their intimacy. They have lived together for upwards of five years ; they give each other the kind name of sister ; and, as they are both decided not to marry, it is probable that they will never quit each other. Agnes has not the talents, education, and the superiority of understanding of her friend ; but she has an infinite share of sweetness, frankness, and ingenuous simplicity, and she is most assuredly not, in other respects, a common character : How can any one be such who is capable of appreciating Madame de Rosmond, and who knows how to love her as she merits ?

Adieu, my friend ; see how I rely on your friendship in abandoning myself to the pleasure of speaking to you, so much at length, of persons who are wholly unknown to you.

From

From the Countess's invitation I expect not to return to Paris till the beginning of October.

LETTER XIV.

From MONSIEUR DU RESNEL *to the*
VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN.

September 12.

I HAVE this day, my dear Viscount, received your letter of the 17th. I was dining at Erneville, and I there read the description of the allegorical garden.

Pauline was in inexpressible raptures at it; she made me read it twice over for Léocadie; this child is only eight years and a half old; but I assure you she is as sensible as if she was fifteen. She and her adoptive mother conjure you to send them,

them, in a letter, a plan of this garden; from this, they will cause to be made, at Erneville, a large plan in relief, which will be placed, as a fixture, in the chamber of Léocadie, who immediately had the idea of asking for this favour, which was promised her. On my part, I have promised that you would do the kindness that is expected from you. I believe that you do not draw; but you know how to take a plan, and this is all that is wanted.

Yes, my friend, you will not become a *dishonest man*; and, far from making myself uneasy respecting your situation, I think it desirable, with a mind such as yours. We can, at our pleasure, multiply good actions; but the opportunities of doing those which are truly great and generous seldom occur. It is the *predestinated of the earth* on whom heaven bestows these valuable opportunities. You will not suffer to escape that which is offered you; having, by the most singular
adventure,

adventure, acquired powerful claims on Madame de Rosmond's heart, admitted to her intimacy, having for this extraordinary woman a passion the more violent as you have never known love; you will triumph over your sentiments in favour of a friend who has placed all his confidence in you. You will serve him not only faithfully, but with zeal and dispatch; you will answer to her for a constancy of which you have been a witness for five years; and, whether you succeed or not, you will afterwards, from the top of the *sacred mountain*,

“ Your ravish'd eyes behind you cast,

“ Trace back the way that you have pass'd,”

enjoy this sweet remembrance added to so many others, and congratulate yourself on a real glory, and on the only true happiness.

Adieu, my friend; when you return to Paris, I beg of you to find out there for me a young artist, who understands well

how to paint in miniature, and who will consent to come and share my solitude for six or seven years ; I will agree to his own terms, provided he be a respectable man, and has talents. I heard Pauline wish for such a master for Léocadie : judge of the interest that I attach to this commission !

LETTER XV.

From the COUNT DE POLIGNI *to the*
VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN.

Paris, September 21

I HAVE received both your letters at the same time—I am just arrived from Fontainebleau..... Great God! what an event! You contributed to save her life, and in what an astonishing manner! I was not worthy of such a happiness!..... Heaven could reserve it only for a pure,
irre-

irreproachable being..... And you her deliverer, you become her friend, you promise to serve me, to speak to her for me !
..... O ! generous St. Méran, you alone of all men are worthy of her ; I feel it, I admit it ; I am sure that, in her company, you cannot have preserved your indifference ; your very letters prove it ; and you do not forsake me, you remain faithful to me. O ! my whole life shall be devoted to you !..... I have no hope ; no, I have none !..... When I recollect my past errors, I fall into a frightful depression of spirits. Ah ! since I have loved her, what a severe judge am I become towards myself !..... But a change of manners so true, so persevering, and five years' constancy !..... She despises me, she hates me !..... Obtain for me, at least, her esteem and her pity. Paint to her my mind ; you know it..... Yes, she hates me !..... What do I ask of her ? Only to be admitted sometimes to her house, with a
D 6 promise,

promise, with an oath never to mention to her a love which she rejects. . . . You know her last answer :

Monsieur de Poligni cannot be admitted into my house but on a condition which he certainly would not accept !—Confounded at this strange answer, I protested that I would, on these terms, accept, with transport, all the laws which she should impose on me ; I conjured her to explain herself ; and this she has always refused with an inflexibility the most persevering.

I have not the madness to hope that you can make an impression on her in my favour ; but I conjure you to endeavour to prevail on her to declare what is the condition which her coldness judges *impossible* ; to me nothing is *impossible*, if I but enjoy her company. She has not used this expression by chance, she attaches an idea to it. I have a right to ask for an explanation ; and she cannot in justice refuse it. To her, it is a thing destitute
of

of interest and importance; but to me, it is every thing. Make her speak then. What is this *condition*? I blindly submit to it beforehand.

I set out on Thursday for the town of Eu, where I have so often in vain resided. With my accustomed submission, I shall not set a profane foot on the happy spot where you are detained. But within six miles of her, and of you, I shall be less miserable, and I shall be able to write to you at all hours. Dear St. Méran, my virtuous friend, if you were to grow cool towards me, what would become of me?

LETTER XVI.

From the VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN *to*
the COUNT DE POLIGNI.

September 22.

I HAVE not yet received any answer from you; I suppose that you are not in Paris, or, to speak more correctly, I am certain of it; for you have long had but one *affair*, and, in my last letters, I mention to you only the object that solely occupies your mind.

I have at last spoken to the Countess; I confined myself to asking her what is *that condition* which she would impose on you, on granting you permission to come to her house. On this, she wished to break off the conversation; and as I insisted warmly: "I conceive," rejoined
6 she,

she, "that the expression which escaped
" me must have excited Monsieur de
" Poligni's curiosity; but I can assure
" you that it is, in a great measure, out
" of respect for him that I will not satisfy
" him; and I am very certain that he
" would infallibly reject the only condition
" that could induce me to admit him
" to my house."—"That, Madam," answered I, "is impossible for you to know;
" allow me to tell you that it is worthy
" neither of your reason, nor of your
" equity, to judge irrevocably of the de-
" cisions of a person to whom you have
" refused to explain your will."—"Those
" who are acquainted with me know that
" I am neither unjust nor whimsical."—
" That is not sufficient; you must not
" put it in people's power to reproach
" you with a mysterious proceeding."—
" People may think of it what they please;
" I will neither explain myself nor re-
" ceive Monsieur de Poligni."—"Is it
" Madame

“ Madame de Rosmond who talks in this
“ manner? Is it the woman the most
“ distinguished for the superiority of her
“ reason?” — “ No, Sir, it is a very com-
“ mon person.” — “ You afflict me dread-
“ fully. What risk do you run by
“ explaining yourself? If Poligni
“ does not accept the condition imposed,
“ you are for ever rid of his pursuits; and
“ if you persist in being silent, you give
“ him the right of importuning you in-
“ cessantly. This is what he will do in
“ future, don’t doubt it; for it is what he
“ ought to do. You authorize him to lay
“ aside that reserve which he has hitherto
“ shewn towards you; deign to put your-
“ self in his place for a moment.”

Here Madame de Rosmond, irritated at being contradicted, interrupted me in a sort of passion, to tell me that she would hear no more of this *tiresome altercation*. In saying these words she got up, and left me abruptly. She has then a
failing!

failing! She cannot bear contradiction! However, she repented of this first movement. An hour after, she apologized to me in the most amiable manner for it, and she has promised me to reflect deliberately *on my request*, and to give me a final answer in a few days. I partly see that, under all this, there is some calumny against you. I advise you to come without delay. Go straight to the town of Eu; the Prince is there, and will be very glad to see you; there we will chat together at our ease. I think I may venture to answer to you that the Countess will at length give the explanation so long wished for.

Adieu, my friend; do not lose any time; come as soon as you possibly can.

LETTER XVII.

*From the same to MONSIEUR DU
RESNEL.*

La M^{re}, September 25.

POLIGNI arrived in the town of Eu last Tuesday. I went thither immediately, and we passed four hours together. I found him more in love than ever, and in the most violent agitation; but, in other respects, still the same, mixing, with originality, the most pleasant fallies to the most affecting traits of passion and sensibility. In questioning me about the allegorical garden, which he does not know, and which was finished only this year, he told me, that if he were allowed to enter it, whenever he got to the summit of the *sacred mountain* he would pretend to have a

stiff-

stiff-neck in order to dispense with looking back. I do not know a more amiable man than he is. I am persuaded that if he can subdue the Countess's prepossessions, he will end by gaining her affection. To-day she has, at length, yielded to my warm solicitations; she has formally promised to explain herself to-morrow. We shall know to-morrow what is this mysterious condition. The Countess herself will give Poligni this explanation in my presence. In the uncertainty of his acceptance, she does not admit Poligni to her house; it is, as Poligni says, *on the frontier, on neutral ground*, that this singular interview is to take place. She has mentioned *Rouville* wood, belonging to the Duke de P***, as the place of rendezvous. Judge, my friend, how we count the hours! how impatient, uneasy, and confused we are!

The post goes out again to-morrow; I certainly will not miss it; you shall know every

every thing. I own to you that, independently of the interest which I take in poor Poligni, I am possessed with the most ardent curiosity that I ever experienced in my life. What completes it, is the state in which I see Madame de Rosmond. She has till now expressed to me no more than aversion to Poligni, for her prepossession against him is very strong; and yet she appears to dread horribly this interview; why should she fear it so much, if she felt nothing but indifference? In short, she has apprised me that I should be a witness of this *astonishing scene*; and she has required from me, beforehand, secrecy concerning all that I should hear.

LETTER XVIII.

From the same to the same.

La M**, September 25.

WHAT a strange catastrophe ! and how much it will surprise you ! I am yet quite moved at it, and I shall have much difficulty to draw up my narrative with any degree of order

Yesterday, which was the great day appointed for the interview, Madame de Rosmond and her female friend were shut up together the whole morning, so I did not see either of them till dinner-time. The Countess, as on the day before, was low-spirited, absent, and silent. On rising from table, I quitted her in order to look for Poligni. I found him already on the road ;

road; we got off our horses, and walked together into the wood: I communicated to Poligni the detail of my observations on the Countess; we exhausted ourselves in conjectures; all that Poligni could divine was, that the Countess would require him to turn *Capuchin*, or even *Chartreux*. He had time to say a great many more foolish things of this kind, for we waited for upwards of two hours; at last a servant, placed as a watch on the high road, came to tell us that he perceived the Countess's carriage. At the expiration of a few minutes, we saw Madame de Rosmond appear, arm in arm with her female friend: We advanced to meet them; the Countess seemed extremely moved, she even trembled; but on her face was seen only the expression of indignation and anger. She sat down on the trunk of a tree, and made Agnes sit beside her.

Poligni,

Poligni, astonished beyond measure at a reception so discouraging, durst not break silence: I began to speak, although I certainly was not, myself, free from emotion. "Well, Madam," said I to the Countess, "my friend is come to receive your commands."—"My commands?" rejoined she, with a proud and disdainful air: "I have none to give him! I would not even hazard a piece of advice!"—"And why then, Madam, so many marks of disdain?" interrupted Poligni; "I can bear with as much respect as pain, your indifference, and even your hatred; but I do not feel myself calculated to endure your contempt. I have been blackened in your eyes: speak; explain yourself; give me the means of justifying myself."—"Justifying yourself? that is impossible: you can only repair."—"Speak, Madam, I will confound odious calumnies."—"Remember, Sir, that I have done every thing
"in

“in my power to spare you an over-
“whelming confusion. But you
“threatened to pursue me to every place
“in order to obtain an explanation; then
“you could not have failed to discover
“this melancholy secret: I will therefore
“acquaint you with it. You shall
“know why I could not admit you to my
“house; you shall learn that there is but
“one method.”—“In the name of hea-
“ven, Madam,” interrupted Poligni,
“explain to me this inconceivable enigma!”
—“Come, sister,” rejoined Madame de
Rosmond, turning towards Agnes, “Lift
“up your veil!” At these words,
Agnes, reclined till now on the Countess’s
shoulder, lifted, with a trembling hand,
the thick crape that entirely concealed
her face. Poligni looked at her, and
turned pale, exclaiming: “Just heaven!
“Mademoiselle de Cernin!” Agnes
dropped again her veil, and threw herself
on the bosom of Madame de Rosmond, who,
weeping,

weeping, clasped her in her arms!
There was a moment's silence. Poligni,
quite dismayed, leant against a tree,
putting his two hands on his face.
"Yes; 'tis she," said Madame de Ros-
mond, "'tis that unfortunate young girl,
"seduced by you six years ago; she was
"then but *fifteen*! . . . Being the daughter of
"a gentleman of Picardy, she was on the
"point of being married to advantage;
"she was cheerfully going to wed an
"honest man by whom she was adored,
"and who was making his fortune.
"Unhappily for her, your regiment came
"into quarters at Chauny! You fell
"in love with her; you took an ungene-
"rous advantage of her inexperience and
"sensibility! And you then aban-
"doned her! This broke her old fa-
"ther's heart. He left more debts
"than property, and this interesting vic-
"tim of your barbarity found herself, at
"sixteen, without an asylum, without
VOL. III. E " friends,

“ friends, without protectors, without re-
“ sources, with an unfortunate passion, a
“ dishonoured name, and heart-rending
“ remorse ! But,” continued the
Countess, “ I see your tears flow. O !
“ do not conceal them ! Happy, a thou-
“ sand times happy is he who can repair a
“ great fault ! Ah ! ’tis assuming a new
“ life ! How great would be the joy of a
“ penitent culprit, if God deigned to lead
“ him back to the first fine days of his
“ career, with the recollection of his errors
“ and of his remorse ! To be able
“ to recover innocence warmly regretted,
“ is it not to be born again ?” Ma-
dame de Rosmond spoke with fire, with
a vehemence of which it is impossible
for me to give you an idea. There
was something irresistible in the sound of
her voice, and in the sublime expression
of her countenance. Poligni, bathed with
tears, fell at the feet of Agnes : “ Dispose
“ of me,” said he to her, “ I am yours ;
“ deign

“deign to grant my pardon; deign, in
“receiving my hand, to restore to me
“peace of mind, your esteem and my
“own!”—“O! my brother!” exclaimed
Madame de Rosmond, with the most
pathetic accent. “Yes; you are my
“brother!” “’Tis at your feet,”
interrupted Poligni with enthusiasm, “that
“I swear to consecrate to her my life!
“Was there ever an oath more sacred?
“Yes; to-morrow I will lead her to the
“altar!”—“No, Poligni,” said Agnes; “I
“am grateful for the repentance which you
“manifest; but I will never quit the bene-
“factress who has taken me in, who has
“consoled me, for the man by whom I was
“deceived and forgotten; love has served
“only to ruin me; friendship has healed
“all the wounds of my heart; to her, will
“I devote the rest of my days.”

Madame de Rosmond and Poligni, in
vain, combated this intention; Agnes per-
sisted in it with as much perseverance as

sweetness. Towards the close of the day Madame de Rosmond said to Poligni the most flattering things, and promised him her friendship. Poligni, quite beside himself, thought himself happy at that moment; he held Madame de Rosmond's hand between his, he bathed it with tears.

.... The two female friends got into their carriage; for me, I dragged Poligni out of the wood; we threw ourselves into a cabriolet that was waiting for us on the high road, and drove on towards the town of Eu, where I slept.

Poligni is very unfortunate. Madame de Rosmond is irrecoverably lost for him. Agnes will certainly persist in her resolution; but it is neither proper nor possible that she can consent to live under the same roof with her seducer; she ought at present to cease to despise and hate him; and she ought also to cease to see him. In short, whatever Poligni may be able to do in the sequel, he will never induce
the

the Countess to share his sentiments. Agnes sacrifices ambition, the greatest establishment, and, perhaps, love, to gratitude and friendship: can the Countess, whose soul is so great and so alive to feeling, bring herself one day to give her hand to the seducer of such a friend? Poligni has already formed all these reflections; he has made up his mind; but he is disconsolate. He returns to-morrow to Paris; he will stay there but a short time, being determined to travel for eighteen months or two years.

Madame de Rosmond shews me much friendship and confidence; she has several times repeated to me that nothing in the world could induce her to marry. She said to me, to-day, at the conclusion of a long conversation: "*My heart is free; but it is full!*" On saying these words she sighed; the tears swam in her eyes, and she fell into a profound reverie. . . . There is certainly in her life, as well as

in her character and person, something very extraordinary, and these mysterious veiled pictures !

No study is more interesting than that of a woman of superior endowments, who possesses great originality. I observe Madame de Rosmond with an attention from which nothing can divert me ; I already perfectly know her mind ; and I am sure that there does not exist one more noble, more feeling, and more refined. Her character is less easy to be penetrated ; for it is not always naturally what it appears to be ; not that she has any dissimulation in her ; but because she has conceived the project of reforming herself in certain respects. I can never find in her any deceit ; I am sensible, on the contrary, that if she gave way to her inclinations she would be frank even to giddiness ; but I often see that she checks herself, and that she wishes to assume virtues which Nature has not bestowed on her. Born proud
and

and impetuous, she makes surprising efforts to become humble, mild, circumspect, and phlegmatic. She labours at this with ardour and sincerity; but as Destouches has said:

“*Chassez le naturel, il revient au galop**.”

Accordingly, her first movements are ever at variance with her habitual manners. See her when nothing moves or irritates

* Here Madame de Genlis has taken an opportunity of shewing how far her countryman, *Destouches*, in imitating a well-known line of HORACE, has surpassed his original:

“*Naturam, expelles forcâ, tamen usque recurret,*”

of which *Francis* gives the following rather indifferent translation:

“*Though Nature’s driven out with proud disdain,*

“*The powerful Goddess will return again.*”

This is by no means so happily expressed as:

“*Chassez le naturel, il revient au galop.*”

which may be Englished thus:

Drive away Nature, she hurries back full speed.—

Translator’s note.

her, every thing in her announces mildness and humility; surprise her in a moment of trouble and agitation, you will discover in her an excessive haughtiness, an energy by no means common, and a vivacity that amounts even to violence. She does not endeavour to hide her failings; she wishes sincerely to conquer them. Although she has an extreme philanthropy, she in general despises mankind; she is unsociable; she attaches no value to the opinion of the world: in labouring thus for herself, she wishes not to impose on any one; she acts only for the sake of her own conscience. Superficial or malicious observers, can see in her only an inconsistent, fantastical, and even artful woman; but her incongruities are redeemed by qualities so eminent, by a soul of a temper so superior, that it is impossible to love her moderately when one is thoroughly acquainted with her.

I send

I send you the plan of the *allegorical garden* and all the inscriptions; I have employed, in this work, all the zeal and activity with which I must be inspired by the desire of obliging you and the hope of pleasing the charming Léocadie.

I have talked a great deal of you and of your neighbours, to Madame de Rosmond, and I have interested her in such a manner, that she has asked me all possible questions on this subject. O! why is she so unsociable, and why, besides shyness, is the very name she bears a real obstacle to an intimacy which would, in other respects, be so well suited! One of the wishes of my heart would be to have it in my power to take Madame de Rosmond into the gardens of Erneville, and to see Pauline walking in these.

P. S. I send, with my packet, a work which I neither love nor esteem; but the first that has made any noise since the death

death of Voltaire and Rousseau; it is the *Confessions* of the latter. They will not, I believe, have your *absolution*.

LETTER XIX.

From MONSIEUR DU RESNÉL *to the*
VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN.

Gilly, February 24.

I AM charmed, my dear friend, with the young artist that you have sent me; independently of his painting divinely, he is very amiable, sprightly, and engaging.

He goes twice a week to Erneville, to give lessons to Léocadie; he is enraptured with her dispositions and with the talent which she already has for drawing, and for which she is indebted to Pauline. This child, who has just attained her ninth
year,

*I should have liked this letter if it had
not been in letters*

THE RIVAL MOTHERS.

83

year, within these few days, is really a bewitching creature. I love her at present for her own sake.

I have no near relations, I shall never marry again, and, between ourselves, at the bottom of my heart, I have also adopted Léocadie; by securing to her my fortune, we shall neither be uneasy about her establishment nor in a hurry to marry her. How pleasing is it to me to associate myself thus to the sentiments of Pauline! and even to her destiny, which is so intimately connected with that of this child!

We have finished the plan, in relief, of the Countess de Rosmond's garden; I say *we*, for we have all worked at it. We sent to Paris for little figures of Sève china, which make the statues of *Truth*, *Virtue*, &c.; the obelisks, the temples, and the grottoes are in pasteboard. The trees are imitated to perfection, and the whole is ornamented by a multitude of charming little artificial flowers. We

E 6 have

have placed all the inscriptions; in short, this plan is the prettiest thing that can be seen of the kind, and it certainly gives a very just idea of the original. We hope that you will come and see us this summer; my neighbours wish it as much as I do myself. Adieu, my dear Viscount, always speak to me of Madame de Rosmond; since Poligni can no longer have any hopes, I have conceived some very lively ones for you, and whatever you may say of the matter, I will preserve them; for I am sure that they will be realized.

De Rosmond


LETTER XX.

From the VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN *to*
MONSIEUR DU RESNEL.

Paris, March 28.

I AM going, my dear friend, to announce to you, a piece of news that will have a great effect in your province. The Dutchess de **** will go this summer to the waters of Bourbon-Lancy; it is Madame d'Olbreuse who has determined her on this journey, and she will accompany her. D'Olbreuse is the friend of the Marquis d'Erneville. I imagine that this old friendship is one of the reasons that has occasioned Bourbon-Lancy to be preferred; for it is Madame d'Olbreuse who made the whole arrangement. The
physicians.

physicians ordered for our Princess the waters of Forges; her female friend recommended to her those of Bourbon; and we have found out that, provided a person takes a journey and drinks mineral waters, the faculty ought to be contented, and if the patient be not cured, it will always be the doctors that are to blame.

Do you see, from this distance, what the presence of a princess of the blood will produce at Bourbon, at Luzi, and in the environs? And the vexation, the deadly rancour that will be occasioned by the distinguished preference, so natural, which will be given to the inhabitants of Ernevillle?

I believe that she will set out in the month of July, or at latest in the month of August. I shall certainly be one of the party; there are now but two journeys that are interesting to me, to Gilly and to La M**.

Madame

*Th. madam De Geny
Your stories are end. lyp*

Madame de Rosmond leaves Paris in three weeks; she takes with her to La M * * her nephew, Count Jules, the Duke de Rosmond's son, a young man of fifteen, charming in every respect, and who, far from having the vices and the frivolity of his father, already displays all the virtues of his mother and of his aunt. Fortunately the Duke has never interfered in his education, in which the Countess de Rosmond has been particularly engaged for these last five or six years. In short, this young man has for his preceptor an ecclesiastic of the most uncommon merit, who is the most intimate friend of Madame de Rosmond.

Adieu, my friend; let me know whether you are still as well satisfied with young Sauval.

LETTER XXI.

From the COUNTESS DE ROSMOND *to the*
VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN.

Paris, April 10.

I AM going to answer you, Sir, with all the frankness that you have a right to expect from me. I have learned to be silent but I shall, all my life, be incapable of deceit ! I will tell you more than you ask me ; for, were I to content myself with answering your questions, I should certainly not deprive you of a chimerical hope ; and to leave it you would be to deceive you.

I have not an *unfortunate passion* ; my heart, as it is improperly termed, *is free* ; that is to say, I am not *in love* ; but is this
enthusiasm.

enthusiasm of a day, this frail sentiment, the only one that can occupy and fill an impassioned soul? Is it the only one that can exalt an ardent imagination? Ah ! I must confess it to you, my heart and my future prospect are no longer my own. . . . I have given the one without reserve ; and the other no longer depends on myself.

Your esteem is valuable to me, because your friendship is become necessary. You love me ; therefore I have no occasion to clear myself to you of the execrable crime that calumny lays to my charge.

To fear that you might suspect of adultery and incest her for whose hand you ask, would be to insult and mistake you.

However, independently of the private affections of my heart, there is a secret and invincible obstacle, which nothing can do away, and which alone would always prevent me from thinking of marriage !

I set

I set out to-morrow for La M** with Agnes, the respectable Abbé, and my nephew. Come and join us there again whenever you can, and I give you my word to reveal every thing to you. I hope that at least friendship may be able to make you amends.

"Elle a, comme l'amour, sa dernière faveur ;

*"C'est son secret le plus intime *."*

LETTER XXII.

From MONSIEUR D'ORCEVAL *to the*
CHEVALIER DE CELTAS.

August 6.

ALL the Princess's baggage is already arrived ; Bourbon-Lancy is all confusion.

* Like love, friendship has her last favour,

'Tis her most intimate secret.

La Motte.

All

All the lodgings in the town are prepared; all the harangues are composed; every body is agog for twelve miles round. Come then, my dear Chevalier, you who are of one of the first families in the province, you will certainly be among *the elect*. As for me, a good country-fellow, without any pretensions, I shall remain quietly in my mansion. Between ourselves, this may become very embarrassing to my brother, who has had the folly to assimilate himself to the nobility; for if the Princess, as it is said, does not deviate from etiquette, it is impossible that he can be admitted to her parties; perhaps, on account of the personal birth of Pauline, an exception might have been made; but the Princess is a woman of very austere manners, and will certainly not be willing to grant such a distinction to a woman whose character is entirely gone. And you may well suppose that the Princess will, the very next day after her arrival, hear all the scandalous history.

history. You know the talk of the country ; and the greatest enemies of my brother and his wife are, at this moment, at the waters of Bourbon, in order to pay their respects to the Princess. The old Marchioness of T***, with her family, has been there this week. Her brother was, for fifteen years, attached to **** palace ; which insures her a distinguished reception ; besides, she is also, through her husband, of a very great family. In short, she has the malice of hell ; she has a wonderful keenness, and a great knowledge of the world, having made several journies to Paris. For forty years she has detested every thing of the name of d'Erneville ; judge of the prepossessions with which she will inspire the Princess. Come then, you will have a near view of all this ; and you will relate to us all these intrigues, with which we will amuse ourselves like philosophers.

Denise,

Denise, who went the other day to Bourbon to dine at the young Countess de T****'s, says, that all that party wish for you extremely.

LETTER XXIII.

The CHEVALIER'S Answer.

Autun, August 9.

So many great people scarcely now make any impresson on me ! But as I was to go quite naturally into your neighbourhood this month, I shall make no change in my arrangements in order to avoid seeing a charming and respectable Princess, whose reputation is so perfect in every respect, that one would ardently desire to know her personally, were she even no more than a private character.

The

The whole article of your letter relative to your brother is delicately and judiciously fancied. The Marchioness de T*** will very properly be the woman of quality, the best treated by the Princess; and this is a thing so just and so simple, that no one will think of being jealous about it: the Marchioness is a lady of a merit truly superior; she is malicious only to her enemies; and, after all, this is politically a very good plan to adopt; it is a great mean of acquiring consideration, and, in the world, a person is never oppressed, when he is constantly an obliging friend and a dangerous enemy. I shall wait on her at Bourbon with an extreme pleasure; I have always been one of her great admirers. I shall set out next week, and, before all, I shall come and spend three or four days with you.

Adieu, my dear fellow; my devoirs to Madame d'Orgeval and to little Zéphyrine.

LETTER XXIV.

From MONSIEUR DU RESNEL *to the*
BARONESS DE VORDAC.

Gilly, August 22.

I AM really in despair, Madam; the dark
enviers of our friends triumph; you have
no idea of the wicked plots that are hatch-
ing at Bourbon. Unfortunately the Vis-
count de St. Méran, as well as Monsieur
and Madame d'Olbreuse, have not been
able to set off at the same time as the
Princess, and are not yet arrived; so that
the old Marchioness de T***, her in-
sipid family, and the Chevalier de Celtas,
&c. &c. may, quite at their ease, calum-
niate the inhabitants of Erneville. The
Dutchess de **** has with her at this
moment, only two showy and volatile
young

young ladies, who appear to be amused at these acts of malice ; they were seen, at the public spring, holding in their hand the infamous libel; and they were heard to sing, in a faint voice, those abominable stanzas. It is said, that the Princess, on speaking of the adoption of Léocadie, expressed the greatest indignation ; in short, the most sarcastic epigrams are quoted, and the most offensive derision is resorted to. What a victory for the Chevalier de Celtas and his friends !..... Monsieur and Madame d'Orgeval are so deficient both in understanding and in feeling, as to experience a stupid joy at all these atrocities ; they have been twice to Bourbon to dine at Madame de T****'s. Madame d'Orgeval was at the spring last Thursday ; the Princess spoke to her, a favour which is due to the protection of the Marchioness de T****, and to the *sentiments* of the Chevalier de Celtas, and which she certainly attributes to her own
graces.

graces. O ! how I hate mischief-makers when they succeed !

Do you consider, Madam, that these shameful calumnies will find their way even to Paris, and that they will here acquire a weight and an importance which they have never hitherto had ? My God ! Madam, could you not go to Bourbon ? Why not get yourself introduced to the Princess ? I am now afraid that St. Méran will not come at all. I am uneasy ; I am exasperated ; pray favour me with a word of answer.

LETTER XXV.

The BARONESS's Answer.

August 23.

AH! believe me, I should be at Bourbon, had I been able to obtain *leave*. But all my entreaties have been vain. I was answered that the Marchioness de T*** being in high favour, I should certainly be confounded in the crowd, and that, perhaps, I should experience some mortification; and these considerations of self-love have prevailed over every other. What I have suffered for this week past is inexpressible!

Alas! the Baron is in the right; those who succeed in this world are constantly fools, intriguers, and knaves.

P. S.

P. S. I open my letter to tell you that Madame Regnard, who is just come from Bourbon, saw arrive at the gate, at the moment when she was coming away, the Count and the Countess d'Olbreuse, and the Viscount de St. Méran in the same carriage. . . . Ah! I breathe, we shall now have defenders.

LETTER XXVI.

From the same to the COUNTESS D'ER-
NEVILLE.

Erneville, September 5.

At length, Madam, the mischief-makers are balked, belied, and confounded. I shall, as long as I live, love the Countess d'Olbreuse. She, who knew nothing of Pauline, has, from the first moment, shewn the most ardent zeal in defending her;

the next day after her arrival, she went with her husband and the Viscount de St. Méran to Erneville ; which greatly surprised the inhabitants of Bourbon, the more especially as it was immediately seen that Madame d'Olbreuse was the *favourite*, the most beloved, and the most esteemed. The following day, at the spring, Madame d'Olbreuse talked of nothing but Erneville and Pauline with the warmest enthusiasm, and in presence of the two Marchionesses de T * * * and their *adherents*.

Judge, Madam, of the spite and of the *inward rage* they must have felt ! Two days after, the Princess had all this *gang* to dinner, and a great many other persons. After dinner, the company sat down to the *cavagnole* table ; in the course of an hour, the Princess got up, saying, that she was obliged to go out a little earlier than usual, because she intended to walk in the gardens of Erneville ! This was so terrible a thunder-stroke that it is asserted
the

the old Marchioness was almost thrown into an apoplexy. Her friends were obliged to open all the windows, and to make her smell to some strong salts. The Chevalier de Celtas turned pale, coloured, fretted, and foamed; but, thank heaven! he did not die on the spot; Providence had in store for him some far different torments.

The Princess invited Pauline and her husband to come to Bourbon. The next day, Madame d'Olbreuse called and begged Pauline to take her to my house. I received, with open arms, this amiable visit, for which I was indebted to my dear Pauline. I have been with the Baron to Bourbon; we were presented to the Princess; and last Wednesday we dined there with Albert and Pauline.

When Madame d'Olbreuse arrived, the Princess was terribly prepossessed against Pauline; but an hour's conversation with her favourite did away all the effect of the

calumnies. In short, Pauline has personally charmed the Princess. She triumphs with an enchanting modesty. For me, Madam, I own to you that I am very insolent; it is impossible for me to enjoy with moderation the success of my friend.

The rage of Madame de T*** and her family is inexpressible; but that of the Chevalier de Celtas is still more violent; at present every one blames them; they are forsaken, censured, and unmasked; but still I do not think them sufficiently punished.

Monsieur and Madame d'Orgeval, in all this, have, in their usual way, acted a mean and pitiful part; Pauline's revenge will be to obtain them the favour of being admitted to the Princess's house.

This, Madam, is all the news, which, I assure you, makes here a very lively sensation. I know how much it will please your maternal heart; I dare believe that the satisfaction which I myself experience
can

can give me a precise idea of yours. Receive, with your accustomed benevolence; the assurances of my respect and affectionate attachment.

LETTER XXVII.

From the same to the same.

September 13.

I know, Madam, that Pauline has written to you to-day; but I know also that, respecting every thing which concerns her, you will find that I *relate* much better than she does; for her modesty deprives you of details that would afford you the most satisfaction.

The Princess dined at Erneville last Saturday. Pauline having desired to have from her the list of the persons that she wished should be invited, the Princess an-

swered her under her own hand: "*that she*
 "*went to see her friends without any et-*
 "*quette*, and that all she should meet
 "with at Erneville would be agreeable to
 "her." In consequence, the worthy Mon-
 sieur du Resnel was invited, as well as
 Monsieur and Madame d'Orgeval. There
 was also a lady from Toulouse who is at
 the waters, and whose name is the Countess
 de * * * *. She is a widow about thirty,
 handsome, amiable, rich, and who appears
 to have taken a great fancy to Monsieur du
 Resnel. So she may, very probably, be-
 come one of our neighbours. The Prin-
 cess arrived with all her suite; we were
 in all four and twenty persons, without
 reckoning the children. The ladies in
 waiting on the Princess are young and
 pretty; one of them is a widow, she does
 not please me:

"*Elle a l'esprit stérile, et le babil fécond *.*"

* She has an empty noddle and a flippant tongue.

Du Fresny.

The

The other is tolerably amiable. Every thing went off in perfection. Pauline was more charming than ever; she was neither in a bustle, nor over-hurried nor embarrassed. She anticipated all, saw all, and was equal to all. She received the marks of kindness shewn her by the Princess with a respectful gratitude mixed with feeling and dignity; in short, with a deportment and manners that exhibited the just measure of all that it was necessary to express. She was dressed with her usual elegance; I never saw her look more blooming and more handsome. The Princess and her ladies cannot be persuaded that she is twenty-eight years and a half old, she scarcely appears to be twenty.

The Princess is affable, gay, and *chatty*. She spoke to Mademoiselle du Rocher, who, from that moment, compared her to *Mandane*, to *Clelia*, and to all the most famous heroines of romance that her memory can recall to her mind. During

this *grand day*, Monsieur and Madame d'Orgeval made Albert and Pauline suffer more than once : Denise, by her pretension to *lively* and *volatile* graces ; and her husband, by his vulgarity. He wished, with the Princess, to have the air of freedom, not knowing that with persons of this rank, familiar manners are equally unbecoming and ridiculous. I believe that, in the bottom of her heart, the Dutchess de *** thought him foolish and impertinent ; but, far from betraying any idea of the kind, she invited him with much grace to come and see her at Bourbon. Monsieur and Madame d'Orgeval being afraid of appearing dazzled by this favour, almost received it with disdain. I think that the most stupid follies which we can commit, are always occasioned by pride, joined to bad taste and a want of the knowledge of the world.

Léocadie was universally admired. The Princess caressed her excessively ; but two persons,

persons, above all, were particularly taken with her, Madame d'Olbreuse and the Viscount de St. Méran. Madame d'Olbreuse conjured Pauline to give her a picture of this child. Pauline consented with pleasure, and, in consequence, Monsieur Sauval, at this moment, is painting Léocadie for the fourth time. In the midst of these brilliant doings, this charming little girl displayed the greatest good-nature ; she thought only of shewing off her friend Zéphyrine to the Princess and to Madame d'Olbreuse, and in a delicate and affecting manner, infinitely above her age. But nothing can disarm envy. I heard Madame d'Orgeval say that these generous attentions were not *without some view*.

The day before yesterday, the Dutchess de *** went to Gilly to see the house and the fine collections of our philosopher, who gave her a superb collation, to which all the

good neighbourhood was invited. On returning to Bourbon, the Princess took Léocadie away with her in her landau. She was seen to arrive holding this child on her lap. Madame de T*** was at her window, which looks into the street; the Chevalier de Celtas was on foot in the square. Léocadie passed the night at Bourbon in the apartment of Madame d'Olbreuse. The poor little girl, separated from Pauline, was so low-spirited that nothing could divert her mind, not even the preparations of a ball given on her account. Yesterday this children's ball took place at the Dutcheſs de ***'s. I was there with Pauline, Madame d'Orgeval, and Zéphyrine. The ball was charming; but nothing was seen but Léocadie; she dances like Pauline, and her beauty was truly angelic. Maurice was also much praised for his dancing and his pretty figure; and I saw *pride*, mixed with soft emotion
and

and joy, pourtrayed on the sweet face of Pauline. The Dutcheſs de * * * * and the young mothers danced till three o'clock in the morning. It is unneceſſary to tell you that Pauline was *unrivalled* at the night ball ; but theſe are not the triumphs that can make her proud. Albert, notwithstanding all our entreaties and thoſe of the Princeſs, could not be prevailed on to dance.

The Chevalier de Celtas came to the night ball. He had armed himſelf with effrontery ; but his ſpleen and ill-humour burſt forth every moment, in ſpite of himſelf. The Princeſs named him once to dance with her. I came out of the ball-room that I might not ſee this cotillion danced.

The little children of the Marchionefs de T * * * were invited to the children's ball, and did not come. The whole family look ſour at the Princeſs ; they will
all

all set off next week ; which will be the more ridiculous as they had taken their apartments for two months. I think that the Chevalier de Celtas will also return very shortly to Autun ; and with a rage so much the more violent, as he will not have the resource of calumniating us and denying our triumphs ; for we have here five persons from Autun who will give an impartial testimony of all that has passed. Besides, the Chevalier began by shewing the greatest enthusiasm for the Dutchesse de *** ; he, most probably, has not failed to write to his numerous correspondents that she is handsome, witty, virtuous, in short, an accomplished Princess ; for his manner of judging is very simple, and it may always be foreseen : it is entirely founded on the opinion that he supposes a person entertains of him. He asserts very gravely that he prefers Madame d'Orgeval's face to that of Pauline.

As

As soon as you can neither admire him nor love him, you are ugly, foolish, and vicious; but as soon as you think him amiable, you have every perfection. Like the ancients, he has but two colours; but unfortunately, they are always false.

There is, between him and the d'Orgevals, a great coolness. Since the latter are admitted to the Princess's, they have ceased going to Madame de T* * *'s. All this has produced an infinite deal of tittle-tattle, and I hope that Monsieur d'Orgeval will end by being entirely disgusted with the bad connexions which alone have occasioned almost all his faults. He is a shallow man; but, at bottom, he is not malicious. He would even have been good-natured, and would never have taken it into his head to be jealous of his brother, but for flattery, which has given him so much ridiculous presumption. I will not say the same thing of his wife; she is naturally deceitful and envious.

The Princess goes away on the 2d of next month ; but Madame d'Olbreuse and her husband will not leave us till the 19th, as they are to spend a fortnight at Erneville castle.

Adieu, Madam, preserve me your kindness which is so dear to me ; I will venture to say that I am worthy of it from my affection for Pauline, and my filial respect for you.

LETTER XXIX.

*From the CHEVALIER DE CELTAS to the
COUNTESS DE B***, Canonefs of
Alix.*

Autun, Sept. 18.

THERE is no *Princess* on earth that can possibly make me forget my amiable cousin; but, during the time that I was at Bourbon, I was so imperiously disposed of, that it was not in my power to consecrate a moment to interests much dearer to me than those of vanity. The Dutchess de **** loaded me with marks of kindness. It is a great pity that this Princess should have for a favourite a woman justly cried down and blown upon, the Countess d'Olbreuse, a superannuated coquette without graces, without wit; but an able intriguer,
and

and the more dangerous, as she sticks at nothing. I had not the good fortune to please her; for, from her reputation, and from what I saw of her, I could not conceal from her the profound contempt with which she inspired me, and I own that I have no merit in having been able to resist her advances and allurements.

What you have been told of the brilliant doings of the d'Ernevilles, is exceedingly exaggerated; previous to the arrival of Madame d'Olbreuse, the Princess, left to herself, had shewn the warmest indignation respecting the pretended adoption, &c.: but, afterwards, through complaisance for her favourite, she, to the great scandal of all the nobility, received at her house people so little worthy, in every respect, of being admitted. However, when we are not in our place, it is impossible to avoid certain humiliations, and the great *Albert* put up with several. For instance, the Princess gave a ball, to which
he

he had permission to come ; but under the express condition of not dancing : was not this provoking to the first dancer in the province ? I, who have no pretensions to this talent, and wished even to be only a spectator, was named to dance with the Princess. Judge how much I was envied !

As for the sudden intimacy of Madame d'Olbreuse and the *wonderful Marchioness*, it is founded on the conformity of their characters and conduct. During the Marquis's stay in Paris, he intrigued with Madame d'Olbreuse, who was then ten years younger, the widow of Monsieur de S****, and who had not then taken a second husband. She became with child, and was privately delivered of that little Stephen *adopted* by the Countess d'Erneville. So she saw with much indulgence young *Léocadie*. Pauline's adventure appears to her nothing more than a very natural and very simple foible.

Here

Here I am returned to Autun. I was so sick of the bustle of Bourbon that I stole away from the place at the moment when it was least expected. Will you come and see us this winter? Do not deprive me of a hope that will make me so happy. Adieu, my lovely cousin, I shall write to you again this week by Bel***, who intends to return to Lyons in a few days.

LETTER XXX.

From the BARONESS DE VORDAC *to*
the MARCHIONESS D'ERNEVILLE.

Sept. 25.

YES; I conceive, my dear friend, that with your disposition and your inclinations you have a pleasure in finding yourself again in solitude. I am by no means asto-
nished

nished that Madame d'Olbreuse should weep on quitting you, and still less so that she should promise to return. My Pauline ! I cannot conceal from you what I think ! No ; that is to me impossible. You must know an idea which I condemn ; but which I in vain repel. Do not scold me for it ; be well assured, that I can entrust it to no one but you. I too love that good, that amiable Countess d'Olbreuse ; there are so many graces in her person, so much frankness and complacency in her disposition ; she is so natural and so full of sensibility ; her face is also so agreeable, how can any one avoid loving her ? And she behaved so charmingly in regard to you ! But, my dear friend, did you not remark what struck me so forcibly ? In sincerity, does her affection for Léocadie appear to you a simple thing ? Most assuredly, Léocadie is an incomparable child : she is an angel. But did you not see in what manner

ner

ner Madame d'Olbreuse looked at her, and how frequently, in contemplating her, the tears came into her eyes? And that curiosity respecting every thing that concerns her, those questions without end, that extreme desire to have her picture! Consider too, that it was Madame d'Olbreuse who determined the Princess to prefer the waters of Bourbon. Consider with what ardour the latter forbade your approach, before she had seen you. The former speaks of your innocence with certainty! Whence does she derive this perfect confidence? She knows so little of you! I own to you, my friend, I never really believed that Madame du Resnel was the mother of Léocadie, and I think I have recognized her, so as not to be able to mistake in Madame d'Olbreuse. I know how injurious this idea is towards her; we must attribute to her an inexcusable weakness, since she must have had that weakness for another
man

man than him she has married but how contradict the testimony of one's own eyes ! I am now relieved ; I have opened my heart to you. I am sure that you will repel with severity this idea ; but, my friend, you will never banish it from my mind.

The beautiful Toulouse lady has been here since yesterday ; she has a real passion for Monsieur du Resnel ; she thinks very seriously of marrying him, and has commissioned me to sound him on that subject. This is what I have already done before I had a commission to that effect, and I am certain that our philosopher will never more risk his freedom. I own to you that I am very glad of it ; for it seems to me that if he was married again, he would be less our friend ; and what a friend ! it is his incomparable attachment to you that gained him my friendship. At present, I feel that I love him also for his own sake ; I am well aware that I am to him no more
than

than *the friend of Pauline* ; but this indirect sentiment makes such an impression on me ! it is sufficient for me, I do not wish him to have any other.

Adieu, my dear friend ; you are expected on Saturday at Gilly, and the master of the house there is preparing an agreeable surprize for Léocadie ; he will present her with a charming collection of *specimens of lava from Mount Vesuvius*, and other curious articles which he has sent for from Italy on purpose for her. Endeavour to come earlier than usual.

LETTER XXXI.

The MARCHIONESS's Answer.

Erneville, September 28.

Most assuredly I shall scold you, my friend. What a shameful idea is yours! I am so accustomed to be of your opinion, I consider you so much as another self, that it seems to me that I am as guilty as you of this vile thought. I repent that you have had it. What! because this interesting woman has done me justice, because she has given me the most amiable and the most useful proofs of esteem and attachment, we should have the ingratitude to suspect her of an error the most degrading! It is true she has manifested a most extraordinary partiality for Léocadie;

but thus it is that people love this child; and, without mentioning Monsieur du Refnel, did you not remark that the Viscount de St. Méran was so singularly taken with her, that, had Léocadie been a few years older, I should have thought him passionately in love with her? I acknowledge, however, that I was struck at the manner in which Madame d'Olbreuse, in our first *tête-à-tête*, spoke to me of Léocadie's birth. It is a thing so universally received that this child is my daughter, that, for a long time past, I have no longer thought of clearing myself from this calumny; I know too well that all that I could say would appear but as falsehood; I should feel a sort of shame to deny formally what every one so positively believes. Therefore, when Madame d'Olbreuse spoke to me of this adventure, I simply replied that I had nothing to say on this subject, that I had made up my mind respecting the public opinion, and that

that I contented myself with the testimony of my own conscience. On this, she embraced me with a tender emotion, saying to me every thing that could convince me that she was thoroughly persuaded of my innocence. Her tone of voice was so true, her expressions so strong, that it was impossible for me to doubt her sincerity. In short, another thing that struck me is, that she asked me very few questions concerning the past, but expressed the most lively curiosity in regard to the future, and to all my projects for Léocadie. I told her that I should not declare to Léocadie her birth till the day of her first communion. I detailed to her my reasons, which she strongly approved; and she constantly repeated to me that an obligation, which to me ought to be sacred, was to inspire Léocadie with a warm affection for that unknown mother, who was so unhappy and so affectionate. All this has suggested to me an idea much

more natural than yours; it is, that Madame d'Olbreuse knows this unhappy mother, and is, no doubt, her confidant and friend. This supposition explains many things; among others, the choice that was made of me in entrusting to me the child.

Albert, when in Paris, was so intimate with the Count and Countess d'Olbreuse, and he spoke to them so often of me, that, probably, it is Madame d'Olbreuse who conceived the idea of giving me this child. But let us keep all these conjectures to ourselves. I did not betray to the Countess the shadow of a suspicion; this secret not being her own, all my questions would be useless, and I have not spoken of it, either to my mother or to my husband. The former has never, for a moment, doubted of my innocence; and, Albert, whatever proofs I may be able to give him of it, will, in this respect, be always wavering, between error and truth.

I have

I have not been completely justified in his eyes, except during the first moments of the false declaration of Madame du Resnel; but, a little time after, I remarked very clearly that he had resumed all his suspicions. He has, on this point, such a long habit of mistrust, that I really believe he would preserve, it even though the true mother were to declare herself and make her appearance. Your poor friend will justify herself only on her death-bed! This is a sweet consolation that is insured to me for my last moments. After having, all my life, borne, without complaining, the overwhelming weight of calumny, I shall be believed when, on the brink of the grave, I shall call God to witness my innocence! Then I shall say to Albert: "You were unjust, "and still I loved you; I forgive you without difficulty!" All his doubts will vanish, and, at least, he will honour my memory!

Ah, my friend! how my heart is overloaded at certain times! And how it is wrung when I recollect the felicity that I enjoyed in my early youth, and during the first two years of my marriage! Where are they, those happy days! What are become of those delicious hopes! Oh! who would have told me then that I could live without Albert's esteem! The recollections left by love, in time lose all their charm; they have no attraction, except in our youthful days; but, what an indelible recollection is that of a friendship so tender, a confidence so intimate, a sentiment so peaceful, so pure; in short, of an affection so perfect! This afflicting, yet cherished recollection, will torment me in my old age, as well as at the present moment. Old age! Formerly I contemplated it without any concern; I saw mine honoured by the confidence, gratitude, and esteem of Albert! But to grow
old

old with his contempt! Odious existence, more frightful than annihilation! When I have lost those attractions and those talents which please him, when I no longer have any thing but a mind that he knows not, and a tarnished reputation! Great God! What will be my fate! And now, even, how horrible would it be, had I had none but cold and dastardly friends! Ah! I am fully sensible of all that I owe to the friendship which has protected and defended me with so much courage, zeal, and perseverance! Believe me, my friend, gratitude is my sweetest consolation.

Adieu; I promise you to arrive *very* early at Gilly, on Saturday.

LETTER XXXII.

*From the DUKE DE ROSMOND to the
COUNTESS DE ROSMOND his Sister.*

Paris, December 19.

WHAT then, my dear sister, still at La M**, and December more than half gone! Do you intend to pass the winter there? Is *the virtuous St. Méran*, who is with you, the cause of this project? And is your proud heart at length captivated? . . . I cannot believe it; women, even the proudest, like you, esteem *good characters*; yet it is never but in favour of *profligate fellows* that we see them renounce their system of indifference. I have laughed heartily at Poligni, who, in order to win you, thought of becoming a
convert,

convert, and whom the desire of pleasing you has made the dullest of mortals. As for St. Méran, who, as every one knows, is madly in love with you, I will lay a wager that his respect and his timidity equal his love ; you have never inspired any but passions of this kind ; this is the reason why you have never loved. Who knows how far a man might have hurried you with giddiness, boldness, and perseverance ? If St. Méran had a little more knowledge of women, what a dance he would lead you in that solitude where you are not afraid to admit him ! In his place, I should be dreadfully piqued at this security, and I should conceive the bold design of turning your brain, of *bewildering* you on the *sacred mountain*, at the very foot of the *altar of Virtue*. This idea will appear to you monstrous ; but I do not conceive how your allegorical garden can inspire your unhappy lovers with

others. Jules writes you charming letters; but, with all the graces of his aunt, he has already some of her romantic ideas: poor Jules! how he will one day be the sport and the dupe of the women!

I will take, for the Abbé, all the steps which you desire with so much ardour. He is a man of good family, and, no doubt, of very great merit; but with an austerity of manners like his, priests obtain livings, not bishoprics. However, I am sensible how flattering it would be to us to make a bishop of my son's tutor, and I hope that I shall succeed. The bishopric in question is asked for by the Prince de ***, for the tutor of his son. Madame de ****, become the implacable enemy of the Prince, seized the opportunity of giving him this glaring mortification, and has promised me to employ all her interest in my behalf; and this, my dear Uranie, is the reason why the *vir-*

tuons

tuous man will have the preference. But for secret passions, intrigue, and favour, he would remain for ever in obscurity.

Adieu, my amiable Uranie. Your sister-in-law complains loudly of an absence which has so long deprived her of you and her son; come back to us very shortly: it is necessary, for the affair of the Abbé, that you should no longer delay your return.

LETTER XXXIII.

*From the COUNTESS DE ROSMOND to the
VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN.*

Paris, May 15.

I SEND you an express, in order that you may share my heart-felt joy. Our good Abbé is appointed to the bishopric of Autun. To obtain him this, nothing less was necessary than all the favour that my brother has enjoyed for these five years, and all the hatred of Madame de * * * * for the Prince de * * *. In short, once, unintentionally, credit and intrigue have served to reward virtue ! Happy the diocese that shall be governed by such a prelate ! He will not proceed thither till towards the end of October, and then he will

will settle there for good ; we shall lose him for ever. This will be a great void in my life ; but I shall be consoled by learning all the good actions that he will do. What pleasure to see merit in its place ! It is an enjoyment that we have so seldom ! My brother conducted himself in this business with a perseverance that I durst not expect from his natural levity ; he is delighted at his success ; but the joy, which this sort of triumph occasions him, is troubled by a private chagrin of a most bitter nature. Poor *Camille Dercy*, his mistress, died yesterday of a pleurisy ! My brother is extremely afflicted !

Adieu, my friend ; Agnes says to you a thousand affectionate things. We still hope that you will be here on the 2d or 3d.

LETTER XXXIV.

*From the MARQUIS D'ERNEVILLE to his
Mother the COUNTESS.*

Erneville, May 25.

ALAS! my dear mother, the unfortunate Camille no longer exists!..... D'Olbreuse writes me word that, on the 14th of this month, she died, of a pleurisy, on the fifth day of her illness!..... So young too!..... How present she is to my recollection!..... How forget that perfect figure, so noble, so expressive, so brilliant!..... And so many graces, so much wit, so many accomplishments!.....

I entreat you, my dear mother, to find a pretext for putting Stephen into mourning.

I am

I am so oppressed by melancholy, and my imagination is so gloomy, that I shall set out to-morrow for Decizes, solely to pass there two or three days entirely alone.

It was in this month that for my eternal misfortune, and for hers, I beheld, for the first time, that unfortunate girl!..... With this indelible idea there is no longer for me any spring!.....

Adieu, my dear mother; I am not now worthy of conversing with you!

LETTER XXXV.

*From MADAME D'ORGEVAL to her
Husband.*

Erneville, August 1.

I HAVE been here these four days, my good friend. The Viscount de St. Méran arrived here yesterday. His journies into Burgundy are becoming frequent; and, indeed, he is received with extraordinary favour.

We have, in the village, a *ghost* that plays all sorts of pranks. You know that Jacinthe's aunt lived in a small insulated house on the banks of the Loire at the *port du Fourneau*. This old woman is dead, and the villagers say that *her soul, dressed in white*, makes its appearance every night; it haunts the cave that leads
to

to the *port du Fourneau*, at the entrance of the village; the servant maids belonging to the castle assert that they have seen it: all these accounts occasion an universal terror.

I think that, under all this, there is some love intrigue. I am ignorant whether it be of an inferior or of an *elevated kind*.

I intend to remain here till your return, which will, I hope, be next week. Adieu, my good friend; Zéphyrine is well; Pauline still seems to be very fond of her; she asked me yesterday to allow her to stay here all the summer, on account of the lessons that are given her. They will make of her *a wonderful woman*; I find her already formal for her age; but I shall console myself for that, provided she marries Maurice.

LETTER XXXVI.

*From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS
DE VORDAC.*

Erneville, August 4.

IN truth, my dear friend, I myself begin to be astonished at our ghost ; and, after having laughed at the frights of the maids and of the villagers, I believe that I am also afraid of it. La France, who is neither a fool nor a coward, has sworn to me that he saw the ghost yesterday, at one o'clock in the morning, running *like a stag*, in the walk that leads to the cave. Rochu, the mariner, protested to me that he saw the same phantom come out once of the house belonging to Jacinthe's aunt, and another time go into it, not by the door, but by passing through the wall.

His

His wife and his son were witnesses of this last fact. Yet the house is absolutely uninhabited; the Viscount de St. Méran has been to examine it with the greatest care; and there are no other openings in it than those of the door and of five windows. Several other stories are told, more wonderful still; but I relate to you only the most authentic. Jacinthe and all our women are frightened out of their wits, without even excepting Mademoiselle du Rocher, who has for a long time past set up for a free-thinker; but who betrayed herself yesterday by fainting, because the wind blew out a candle that she held in her hand when she was crossing the court. This event does not appear supernatural to you; but Mademoiselle du Rocher thought that it was a trick of the ghost, and she fainted away on the spot. When she recovered her senses, she maintained to us that a white figure, *as big as a giant*, flying like an *arrow out of a bow*,
had,

had, in passing by, put out her light. I take every precaution imaginable that these tales may not be told to the children; and as yet they know not a word of them.

How we love the marvellous ! that is to say, every thing that affects us strongly. These frights, which are very real, amuse every one ; they have a sort of charm for those even who experience them ; for they would be very sorry to be undeceived. Never was the castle so enlivened, never were we less vapourish in it. There is, on earth, only one real blessing ; that is peace, sweet tranquillity* ; and our restless heart is ever wishing to be agitated ; a certain proof that we were not formed solely for this transitory life, and that

* How this blessing is to be obtained, we are told by a great moral poet of our own nation, in the following beautiful apostrophe.—*Translator.*

“ And Peace, O Virtue ! Peace is all thy own.”

POPE'S *Essay on Man*, Ep. iv. l. 82.

there

there is another where our feelings will be suited to our destination.

My Léocadie has not been well these two days; she grows very tall; I hope that this is the sole cause of her indisposition. How amiable I find the Viscount de St. Méran! he has so much wit, and of the genuine kind! And, then, I assure you that he is in love with Léocadie; he looks at her, he sighs, he is thoughtful, and he thinks of nothing but her. I have read that Madame de Maintenon inspired a passion at eleven years old; Léocadie is ten and a half; and she is certainly a thousand times handsomer than ever was Scarron's widow, whose beauty was by no means remarkable.

Adieu, my friend; come and see us. You, who are fond of stories of ghosts, will be in your element here; you will have every day five or six new ones. I should think our phantom far more amiable than terrifying, if it could attract you.

LETTER XXXVII.

From the MARQUIS D'ERNEVILLE *to the*
COUNTESS.

Erneville, August 7.

GREAT God!..... I have been almost every thing, and, at length, I am a visionary! But what do I say! Ah! wretch that I am!..... No! it was not an illusion! My dear mother, you alone can pity me!..... But it is impossible for me to tell you to-day this strange secret. My head burns, my hand shakes. My ideas are so confused!..... O! why cannot I entirely lose my senses and my memory!.....

LETTER XXXIX.

*From MADAME D'ORGEVAL to her
Husband.*

Erneville, August 8.

You did well, my good friend, to delay your return; you would not have found any amusement here. We have passed these last three days in a very dull way. Léocadie for eight and forty hours had a high fever, but attended with no sort of danger; yet you may well suppose that Pauline has been in a terrible taking; she sat up for two nights; all *the friends* are come, the Baroness and the philosopher, and we have had from hour to hour *scenes of sensibility*. . . . St. Méran is absolutely *smitten* with this little girl; I never
10 heard

heard encomiums more extravagant ; and this is saying a good deal of the place whence I am writing. Zéphyrine has acted her part very well too ; she has perfectly insinuated herself into Pauline's good graces. I promise you that the cunning little jade is no fool for her age ; but she is in a good school.

This is not all : Léocadie is much better ; but your brother has been very ill since yesterday. This sudden illness came on in the most extraordinary manner that can be imagined. I will tell you all that I know about it, and you will form your own opinion of the matter.

The day before yesterday, in the evening, Léocadie was already much better ; but Pauline again set up with her till half past two o'clock in the morning ; *the elect* were with her in her room, that is to say, the Baroness, the philosopher, and St. Méran ; while the Baron, Mademoiselle du Rocher, Remi, Sauval, Madame Regnard,

nard, and myself were in the drawing-room. We played at whist and *reversi*; my brother went in and out. At last, at a quarter before three, Pauline, surrounded by her court, made her entry, came and kissed my forehead, said, languishingly, a kind word to every one; and, leaning on the arm of her confidant Vordac, quitted us to go to bed. After the departure of the *queen*, the favourites disappeared; there now remained in the drawing-room only Remi, Sauval, and myself.

My brother said that, the heat being excessive, he wanted to take the air, after having been in the house the whole day. We made him promise to go towards the cave, in order to watch *the ghost*, and I determined to wait his return. We began to drink tea, and, at the expiration of an hour and a quarter, the Marquis not coming back, the young painter proposed to me to go and meet him. As it was broad day I consented. We went

towards the cave, and we saw the Marquis and St. Méran coming out of it; but it would be impossible for me to give you an idea of your brother's frightful figure. He was as pale as death; his looks were horribly wild; and he walked staggering, like a drunken man. St. Méran appeared agitated; but yet he betrayed no sign of fear. Sauval and I were quite filled with consternation at your brother's aspect. He felt a visible embarrassment on perceiving us; he wished to stammer out something; he knew not what he said; he fluttered; his voice trembled. St. Méran began speaking to tell us, laughing at the same time, that the ghost had not made its appearance; but that the Marquis, in the darkest part of the cave, had met with a rock against which he had severely hurt his leg. What to think of this story? There was no blood on his stocking; this wound could not be considerable, and
he

he was in a dreadful condition! I know that, so far from having a weak mind, he is very brave; yet he was terrified and quite beside himself: that is certain. . . . And what was St. Méran doing there, who had left the drawing room half an hour before him, and who said, on quitting us, that he was going to bed? In short, we learnt the next day that the Marquis had a violent fever, which still continues; he will see no one; Pauline even has not permission to enter his room but for a moment in the course of the day. . . . There is, under all this, some very singular mystery! As Sauval has related the situation in which we found the Marquis on his coming out of the cave, every one is persuaded that he has seen the horrible spectre. I myself, indeed, know not what to think. Yet St. Méran was with him, and appeared very quiet; I am lost in conjectures. All this gives a prodigious weight to the stories of the ghost;

H 2

ghost; and I assure you that we are all dying with fear.

Adieu, my good friend, tell me what you think of these adventures.

LETTER XL.

From the MARQUIS to the COUNTESS.

Erneville, August 14.

BANISH your alarms, my affectionate mother. It is true that I have been very ill; but the fever has left me. However, you must once more allow me to postpone the account which you ask of me. I conceive your curiosity; but my head is so weak! I am going to travel about the neighbourhood for eight or ten days; afterwards I shall return; I will then write to you at great length, and you shall know every thing.

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear mother, I am very unhappy, and without any hope of ever being otherwise.

LETTER XLI.

From MONSIEUR D'ORGEVAL *to the*
CHEVALIER DE CELTAS.

August 13.

I CAN at present, my dear Chevalier, solve to you the *enigma*. You thought very right, when I shewed you Denise's letter, that there was neither an *apparition* nor a *ghost* in question. This is what I was told at Bourbon, where the story makes a great noise.

Albert was jealous of St. Méran; he listened to conversations; he intercepted

notes, &c.; in short, he has fought with the Viscount. They made an appointment to meet in the cave from which fear drives every body away. You know that in the middle of this cave, the roof is intersected by a great space exposed to the open air; there, they fought near the rock; you know this spot.

The Marquis was wounded. It was agreed to keep the matter very secret; however, during his illness, Albert could not dissemble his chagrin and rancour; he would not see his wife, and three days after, St. Méran set off, before Albert's recovery. All this is certainly very clear.

In short, my brother, who is scarcely recovered, has just quitted Erneville; he is travelling; Pauline is low-spirited and uneasy; I think that this fine romance will end by a separation. I wonder that my brother should have the patience

to wait so long ; for, in good earnest, here are *three* well ascertained, the Duke de Rosmond, the *philosopher*, and St. Méran.

If you were not so discreet, you might, very probably, name us a *fourth* ; I have ever been persuaded that you formerly enjoyed this kind lady's favours, during Albert's famous journey to the waters of Vichi.

Adieu, my dear fellow; my compliments to our friends.

LETTER XLII.

The CHEVALIER'S Answer.

Auron, August 15.

As you very justly observe, *nothing is more clear*. Indeed, as for *my discretion*, I might say of the *heroine*, that the lover favoured by her

"A si peu de tems pour le croire,

*"Qu'il n'en a pas pour s'en vanter *."*

But (without reckoning me) we might easily find *half a dozen*. You have, in your calculation, forgot the President de * * * *, with whom she intrigued at Dijon; and then the two drinkers of the waters

* Has so little time to believe it,
That he has none to boast of it.

of

of Bourbon, Landry, and Duva; these three are full as well *ascertained* as the others. We may, without temerity, suppose at least as many unknown ones; so I believe that the total number will fully amount to fifteen. And she still writes her *journal* and her *memoirs*! I imagine that, according to the example of the famous Madame de Staal, she there paints herself only *en buste*. But is not that sufficient? *The heart* is in the bust, and the heart is every thing:

“*Le reste ne vaut pas l'honneur d'être nommé **.”

Inform me of the catastrophe, I beg. If, as all respectable people think, this is not an eternal separation, your brother is the most foolish and the meanest of men.

Adieu, my dear fellow; my respectful devoirs to Madame d'Orgeval.

* The rest deserves not the honour of being mentioned. Tragedy of *Cinna*.

LETTER XLIII.

*From the MARQUIS to his Mother the
COUNTRESS.*

Erneville, August 26.

I AM going, my dear friend, to tell you a circumstance which my reason belies ! a circumstance which I could confide to no other person, without covering myself with the greatest ridicule. But you will listen to me ; you will pity me ! I cannot say, *you will believe me*, I do not believe myself !

On the 6th of August, Pauline being still uneasy about Léocadie, we sat up in that child's room till near three o'clock in the morning ; then Pauline went to bed, and I had a mind to avail myself of the finest night in the world to take a walk.

The company made me promise to direct my steps towards the cave, become celebrated by the accounts of apparitions which I have already mentioned to you !
..... I quitted the drawing-room alone ; in order to shorten the way, I passed through the long gallery that leads to the chambers of Jacinthe, of the other waiting-women and Léocadie. The lamps were out ; but the day was beginning to dawn, and I could already, if not distinguish, at least partly see, objects. I had got half-way along the passage, when I perceived, a few paces from me, a white figure that appeared to me to come out of Jacinthe's room. It immediately occurred to my mind, that it was one of the young maids amusing herself in personating the ghost ; I instantly called out, at the same time naming myself, that I ordered her to stop. Instead of answering, the figure took to flight. You know that I run well ; but the figure ran in a supernatural manner !

ner ! And I thought that there was certainly no woman in the castle who had this surprising agility. . . . The figure constantly preserving the advantage which it had at first, kept at the same distance ; at the end of the gallery, it cleared the little stair-case with an inconceivable rapidity, and I lost sight of it ; I imagined that it was going to the cave, and as it went up the lime-tree walk, which is the longest road, I took that of the lower court, which is infinitely shorter. I had my master-key in my pocket ; I opened the door, and was within thirty paces of the cave at the moment when the figure was coming out of the lime-tree walk ; I flew to meet it, and was at no more than ten paces from it, when I felt myself laid hold of behind, which forced me to stop. At that instant the figure passed like lightning, and entered the cave ! It was St. Méran who had stopped me, and who still held me fast, at the same time bursting out into
loud

loud fits of laughter, and asking me whither I was going so fast. I disengaged myself quickly from his arms, and ran as hard as I could into the cave; he followed me.

..... At fifty paces from the place where the roof, fallen in, forms a large opening which admits of the sky being seen, I perfectly distinguished the white figure that had very little the start of me! I had several times called to it that it should not escape me, and that I would pursue it with perseverance. It was broad day.

..... All at once, the figure, instead of proceeding forward, sprang on one side, and climbed the rock that stands in the most exposed part of this place in the open air. I stopped at the foot of the rock, calling out to St. Méran whom I heard running, that the phantom could no longer escape from us. On perceiving St. Méran, I prepared to mount on the rock. At that moment, the white figure, shrouded from head to foot, said to me, "*Stop!*"

This

This sweet, but clear and sonorous voice, pierced to the very bottom of my soul. How terrible did it appear to me, it was the voice of conscience ! I remained riveted by astonishment. The figure then lifted up its veil, and discovered to me its face. O ! inconceivable illusion ! it was she ! I saw her pale and motionless ; but more beautiful, more majestic than ever, looking at me stedfastly it was she it was Camille. . . . I wished to doubt ; I ventured to fix my eyes on her dazzling and formidable countenance ! I could not stand her penetrating and severe look ! It seemed to me that, at the bottom of my heart, a mortal wound was re-opened and inflamed ! My blood was frozen in my veins ; and, fainting, I fell into the arms of St. Méran !

I remained for three quarters of an hour in this situation ; at length, through St. Méran's assistance, I was restored to life,
Trembling,

.... Trembling, I cast my eyes on the rock !..... I no longer saw any thing !
.....“ What’s the matter with you ?” said St. Méran to me ; “ What has happened “to you ?”—“ What,” rejoined I, “did you “see nothing ?” “ Nothing at all,” answered he, “ and I own to you that this “question from your lips, and the situation “you are in, appear to me the most surprising things imaginable.” This answer made me experience a sort of confusion of a nature absolutely new to me ; the shame of appearing pusillanimous dissipated for a moment both my trouble and terror ; I strove to smile. “ It is not,” replied I, “ that I believe I have seen a phantom ; “but, when you stopped me at the entrance “of a cave, a woman had entered it, I am “certain, and I think it was young Suzette. “..... As for my fainting, you must “know that, for some time past, I have “been subject to accidents of this sort ; “and, besides, in running, I hit myself
“ violently

“ violently against this rock ; I have hurt
“ my leg ; the pain, and the emotion of a
“ rapid race, made me faint.” St. Méran
seemed to believe me. He gave me his
arm, and we returned to the castle. On
coming out of the cave, we met Madame
d’Orgeval ; I had certainly in my coun-
tenance something very extraordinary ; for
she looked at me with the air of the most
profound astonishment.

I returned home ; I shut myself into my
room. I threw myself into a chair ; I
mustered up all my strength ; I recalled all
my reason, in order to persuade myself
that what I had just seen was nothing more
than an illusion ; but in vain ! I
might possibly have believed it, if, on en-
tering the cave, my imagination had been
struck, or if the aspect of this figure had
astonished me ; but till the very instant
when I heard that formidable voice (which
seems still to ring in my ear), I had not
the smallest emotion ; I was not thinking
in

in the least of the unfortunate object that presented herself to my eyes! In short, after this terrible apparition, alone in my room, chilled with terror, I heard, I saw nothing. An incontestable proof that the apparition on the rock was not the work of my imagination. . . . Besides, I was sure of having seen her ghost a second time her stedfast and penetrating look had so fully penetrated to the bottom of my heart! Yet how to believe, with certainty, such a prodigy! I could neither persuade myself of it, nor doubt it. . . . In this strange perplexity of ideas, I suddenly thought that, perhaps, a false account had deceived me; that, perhaps, a *letbargy* had given rise to this report; that, in short, Camille was still living, and that I had not seen an empty shadow, but Camille herself. In this supposition, it was very difficult to conceive why she wandered in this manner, during the night, round Erneville castle; but, indeed

deed, this was only a singularity which had nothing supernatural. Struck by this idea, I immediately wrote to d'Olbreuse to inform him that I had particular reasons for doubting of Camille's death, and I conjured him to make, on this head, the most precise inquiries.

Having written this letter, I was obliged to lie down; I had a burning fever. Some hours after, I got up and wrote you that note which has occasioned you so much uneasiness. In the evening I again went to bed, where I remained several days afterwards the fever went off. Towards the end of the week, I received the Count d'Olbreuse's answer, which allowed me not to preserve the smallest doubt respecting the death of the unfortunate Camille ! . . . He wrote me word that, being at the point of death, she had sent for Madame d'Olbreuse, who had not torn herself from her till after she had received her last breath and that he, d'Olbreuse, had,
three

three days after, met her funeral in the *Rue St. Honoré* !

She was no longer in existence on *the 14th of May* ! and I *saw her* in the night of *the 6th of August* ! All reasoning is done away by a certain, positive fact : I have seen her !

I wished to see her again ! I returned privately to the cave for three successive nights ; I there experienced the most violent emotions ; but nothing appeared ! I am determined to return thither again, I am determined to see her once more ! Adieu ; my dear mother ; O ! do not tell me that this is an error ; you would add to my affliction without undeceiving me. I shall repeat to you even to my last breath : *I have seen her !*

LETTER XLIV.

*From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS
DE VORDAC.*

Erneville, August 27.

No, my dear friend, all the stories of apparitions are entirely finished ; but, notwithstanding all my pains, the children have heard of them. This is what I have discovered. I have remarked that, since her illness, Léocadie is become fearful ; as soon as it grows dark, she dares not go alone from one room to another, and when I wish to compel her to it, she colours, turns pale, and is visibly confused. Surprised at this change, I took her apart, in order to question her. You know her candour ; after a little hesitation, she
owned

owned to me that there had happened to her *a very extraordinary event*, and that, in short, she had seen *a phantom*. I asked the particulars, and she related to me that it was on the night when she was most ill, and in which I was so ill myself, that Albert positively ordered me at two o'clock in the morning, at the moment when she was falling asleep, to go and lie down in my own room, promising that he would come for me as soon as she should wake. Léocadie affirms then, that, about an hour after my departure, she awoke, because she felt *some one embracing her*, and that her face was bathed in tears. She opened her eyes, saying, "O! 'tis *mamma!*" but that she saw an unknown figure *of a wonderful beauty, dressed in white*, who instantly fled. Jacinthe was there, and ran immediately to her bed-side. Léocadie, much affected, asked her who was that handsome woman? Jacinthe, astonished, answered her that she had seen nothing, and

and maintained to her that it was a dream. At the same time she prevailed on her not to speak of it to me, because I should take her dream for delirium, and this would give me the most cruel inquietude.

Léocadie kept silence, and since she has recovered she durst not mention the matter to me, thinking, she said, that I should laugh at this vision; but, unfortunately, she is so strongly convinced of the reality of this apparition, that nothing will ever be able to dissuade her from believing it. To all my arguments she constantly answers: "*I was not dreaming; I was not asleep; I was not delirious; I saw it.*" I asked her if she had retained a distinct recollection of this figure; she said "*that she recollects only its large black eyes filled with tears, and its surprising beauty;*" but that she had not had time to examine all its features.

No

No doubt, all the accounts of the apparition of *the white figure* have struck her imagination and caused this illusion, the more especially as she had heard Suzette speak of *the phantom of the cave*. This is what reason tells me ; but as it is allowable for women to be weak and superstitious, I own to you, my dear friend, that in spite of myself, this account has struck me. This kiss, these tears ! this handsome female figure ! I am ashamed to tell it to you but if we ceased to receive the *anonymous new year's gifts*, I should think that her mother was no longer in existence and then Léocadie's vision will appear to me nothing less than a chimera. How weak is the power of reason in comparison to that of the imagination ! This gives me much concern, for it has made, on my Léocadie's mind, an impression that will never be effaced.

I have

I have a fresh chagrin still more bitter !
..... Albert is in a state which I cannot
in the least comprehend Every day
seems to increase his gloomy melancholy ;
he falls away, he changes for some
time he has passed his nights in his own
room ; he has left mine, because, he says,
he wishes, on account of his health, to take
asses' milk for a month and to be waked
at day-light And I know that he
takes a walk alone every evening, and
that yesterday he did not come in till near
five o'clock in the morning ! If,
under all this, I suspected an intrigue, I
would not speak of it, no, not even to you,
my dear friend ; but I am very sure that
nothing of the kind is in question. No,
he wishes to be alone ; he wishes at his
ease, and without any restraint, to give
himself up to a secret chagrin ! O !
who would have told me formerly that
Albert, while near Pauline, would fall into
a state

a state of languor! It is not enough for me to lament the loss of his confidence and esteem; my presence too must be irksome to him!

Every year produces for me fresh troubles! And I still foresee more cruel ones for the time to come!....

Ah! how much I stand in need of courage and of the sweet consolations of friendship!

LETTER XLV.

From the MARQUIS to the COUNTESS.

Erneville, August 28.

OH! what a scene! . . . into what dreadful disorder she has thrown me!

Impelled by a sentiment which I cannot define, I could not, within these few days, forbear returning every night to the cave. I was there again yesterday at two o'clock in the morning. . . . Every one, being gone to bed in the castle, was indulging in the sweets of sleep! I, alone, was sitting up! . . . The sky was covered with clouds, and the night was excessively gloomy. . . . Being arrived at the middle of the cave, I sat down at the foot of the rock, with my back turned to the part of the roof which
is

is towards the castle, and through which I had just passed. . . . Presently the wind rose, and the thunder roared ! . . . Every nocturnal storm makes on me a lively impression ; and the recollection which it recalls to my mind, was still more striking at the foot of this formidable rock ! . . . I abandoned myself entirely to the most painful reverie : by degrees my head became giddy. . . . I thought that, by the gleam of the lightning, I was again going to behold Camille, that she would reappear in a terrible and menacing attitude, in order to reproach me with her misfortune, her death, and my crime ! . . .

The storm still continued, and the dawn began to dissipate the darkness. . . . All at once I heard behind me a slight noise. . . . I shuddered ; trembling, I lifted up my eyes to the summit of the rock, and I cried out, "*Yes, appear ; I dare wait for thee, and call thee !*" . . . Scarcely had I pronounced these words, when, on the summit

abow

of the rock, I saw a figure, dressed in white, rise gently ! It seemed to me that I had just been struck by the lightning !

A mechanical and convulsive movement tore me from my place, and I fell prostrate.

" Oh ! whom then dost thou call ? " said a soft and trembling voice ! This voice

occasioned me a violent agitation of another kind ; I got up again ; I looked about me, and I discovered Pauline in tears, holding out her arms to me !

. . . . Surprise, confusion, and tender emotion rendered me immoveable and dumb.

Pauline descended from the rock, and I found myself in her arms. . . . I knew not

rightly what I was doing. . . . I pressed Pauline to my bosom, then pushing her

away with wildness : *" Begone, "* said I to her, *" Oh ! near this rock, I cannot re-*

" ceive your embraces ! Begone, I wish " to be alone here. *" — " You chill me with*

" terror, " exclaimed she, *" I will not leave "* you. *" — She turned pale, on saying these*

words,

words, and I no longer thought of any thing but her ! " Dear Pauline," resumed I, " let us go out of this place, " come, follow me !"—On speaking thus, I hurried her away, and we re-entered under the roof of the cave. . . . We soon found ourselves involved in total darkness ; we walked on with rapidity ; Pauline was silent, and I held her hand. . . . In the course of a few minutes I perceived that this hand squeezed me strongly, and that it was excessively cold ! An extraordinary terror seized me ! . . . " Pauline," said I in a faint voice, " speak to me !" Pauline answered not, and her icy hand squeezed mine more strongly still ! . . . My hair stood an end ; I quite lost my senses. . . . " Whither are you leading me ?" cried I, " . . . No matter—I must follow you." . . . We kept constantly advancing. . . . At length we reached the end of the cave ; the day lighted us, and I again beheld Pauline, but pale, out of breath, fainting,

and almost senseless. I burst into tears, I carried her to a bench in the lime-tree walk, where she quickly recovered her senses. We then returned to the castle.

You may well suppose that I was under the necessity of submitting to the most embarrassing examination. I began by taking the most solemn oath, that no sort of intrigue attracted me to the cave. Pauline believed me. Afterwards I protested that, since my illness, I had, on my mind, various sorts of dark vapours and strange fancies, so that I took no pleasure but in this solitude of the cave, because I could there abandon myself, without interruption, to my gloomy reveries. During this explanation, Pauline wept much, with a bitterness, and at the same time a gentleness that penetrated me. I fell at her feet; I mingled my tears with hers. She informed me, in her turn, that having been waked by the thunder, of which she is afraid, she had gone

into my room, that not finding me there, she had taken the road to the cave, knowing that I sometimes went thither. . . . Alas ! it would, no doubt, be very pleasing to me to be able to open my heart to the companion of my life ! There was a time when I would have communicated this secret without any difficulty. . . . She refused to hear it ; now I dare own to you, I no longer feel that want. Confidence is a consolation only when it is reciprocal. . . . painful secrets have put between Pauline and me some cruel barriers ! Pardon me, dear mother, this expression which has escaped me. I know it is impossible for you to suspect her ; O ! how much I envy you your happy security ! . . . But, believe me, if, in spite of myself, I do not share it, Pauline is not the less dear to me. Can *a moment of forgetfulness* efface the merit of a whole life devoted to virtue ?

Adieu, my dear mother; I think that I shall soon come to Dijon; I am wasting away here! my reason is bewildered. Perhaps, I should recover it near you; but who will restore me repose? . . .

LETTER XLVI.

From the MARCHIONESS to the
BARONESS.

Erneville, September 1.

WILL you believe me, my dear friend, two letters, which I have just received from Dijon, the one from my mother, and the other from Albert, inform me that he is set out for England! Doctor Morney, whom he consulted, has ordered him the Bristol waters! He is gone! . . . he has taken with him little Stephen whom
my

my mother has entrusted to him, because she wishes that this child should make himself master of the English language which he can already read !

Albert is gone ! the sea is going to separate us ! He will not return till towards the end of November ; at least he says so ; but, perhaps, he will not return till the spring. I say nothing to you of what I feel ; you know me.

And you, my affectionate friend, will you abandon your unfortunate Pauline ? Ah ! come ! believe me, she is more to be pitied than you can imagine.



LETTER XLVII.

From the MARQUIS to his Wife.

London, November 15.

You have, dear Pauline, asked me for details respecting the city of London; and I can now satisfy your curiosity; I have been returned from Bristol a week; I have several times rambled over this capital so large, so rich, yet so inferior to Paris. The splendour of its shops constitutes its principal beauty; yet these shops so highly extolled appear to me by no means superior to those of our *Rue St. Honoré*; and nothing, in this country can be compared to the colonnade of the Louvre, and to the exterior magnificence of the houses and palaces with which Paris is ornamented.

The

The King of England is the worst lodged monarch in Europe; but, far from being able to criticise St. James's, the spectator feels a sentiment of respect on visiting this gloomy abode, when he reflects that the kings inhabit it only because they have given up to the invalided sailors the elegant and superb palace of Greenwich*. Treasures have been squandered for the construction of Carleton-house, the architecture and the whole mass of this build-

* Here Madame de Genlis seems to have lost sight of the old adage, so fully proved by the experience of ages, and thus elegantly expressed by a French poet:

“ Le Trident de Neptune est le Sceptre du monde.”

Old British tars are respected in their country; and no edifices, however magnificent, are thought too good for their residence. St. James's palace was originally an hospital for lepers; but Greenwich hospital never was a king's palace: it was erected, by a grateful people, for the particular accommodation of the naval veterans who had bled in their defence.—*Translator's Note.*

ing is of so poor a style, that, at the first glance, it presents the aspect of an edifice partly destroyed by fire ; for the columns are so slight, and so far distant from each other, that it might be imagined one half of them was wanting. The inside of the palace does honour to the Prince by whom it is inhabited ; it is said, that he alone ordered all its arrangement and decorations. This palace reminded me of that of Compiègne, when entirely re-built ; the King of France, ill-advised in every thing, made choice of an architect without genius, who spent millions (of livres) in the construction of the most heavy-looking country-seat in Europe. Less money was not employed in making the overloaded gardens and the paltry cottages of Trianon *. Let these edifices be compared to those erected by order of Lewis XIV.

* This was one of the favourite retreats of the late unfortunate Queen of France.

and

and an idea may be formed of the two kings and the two ages.

As you wished, I have looked for Richardson's tomb in Westminster-abbey; I found in this vast church some rich monuments, erected in honour of actors and actresses; but the author of *Clarissa* has no tomb there. This is an astonishing circumstance; for, in all countries, justice is shewn to *great men*, when they are no longer in existence *. *Epitaphs*, though

* While we are willing to subscribe to Richardson's merit as a *novelist*, we cannot coincide in opinion with our authoress that, merely on that account, he was so great a man, as to be entitled to a monument among men *really* great. Though, previous to the revolution, actors and actresses were denied *christian* burial in France; yet the monuments erected in Westminster Abbey to the memory of Garrick and Pritchard, to which Madame de Genlis probably alludes, would not have excited her astonishment, had she known that the former was considered as the British *Roscius*, and that the latter excelled not more on the stage, as an actress of first-rate merit, than on the great theatre of life, as a spotless character and a pattern of every virtue that can adorn woman.—*Translator's Note.*

often

often too flattering, are never unjust ; and black envy has not spread her venom over the stone of the sepulchres, as has been ingeniously expressed by one of our poets :

“ La mémoire est reconnaissante,

*“ Les yeux sont ingrats et jaloux *.”*

It is in St. Bride's church that the remains of Richardson repose. Nothing is to be seen but a plain stone, which contains only his name and the year of his death, without any panegyric †.

In order to terminate my description of London, I must again speak of a few of its edifices. Somerset-house, a pile of building more imposing from its size than remarkable from its beauty ; St. Paul's church, which must be admired by any one who has not seen St. Peter's at Rome,

* Memory is grateful,

The eyes are ingrate and envious.

† He died on the 4th of July 1761, aged 72.

and

and the charming little church of St. Stephen, Walbrook, which appears to me a master-piece of its kind ; these are all the edifices that are worth mentioning. I must, however, praise its noble foot-pavement, so convenient for the people ; but a thing which displeased me very much is, that throughout the whole extent of London there are to be met with no public fountains, at least apparent ones, and decorated : it seems to me, that this is an embellishment equally agreeable and necessary in a great city *.

In no country are there so many charitable institutions as in England, and in no

* Probably, Madame de Genlis was not aware that all the houses in London may be said to be provided with their own reservoir, the water being laid into almost every one of them, either from the Thames or the New River, nor that the aqueduct of the latter, including its numerous windings, is computed to traverse a distance of no less than sixty miles, before it reaches the capital—*Translator's Note.*

city

city are there so many as in London. This is what cannot be too much admired nor too much praised. Every one knows with what facility a subscription, for the relief of the unfortunate, is formed and filled in England.

The English have more liberality than we have ; they give more freely ; but they are less delicate. This must, in general, be the distinctive characteristic of a commercial nation. Trade produces great changes of fortune : a man busied, from his infancy, in the means of acquiring money, cannot know that delicacy which is so punctiliously observed amongst us. Being raised from mediocrity to opulence, and always preserving the hope that he may still increase his fortune, he is like the gamblers who, in their lucky moments, readily part with their money, and almost without counting it. One may be saving of a fixed property, of an income that cannot be augmented ; one cannot be
so,

so, at least in general, of a property procured by chance, and which the same favourable chance may double, treble, &c. Imagination has no bounds; the hope of an immense profit must preserve a man from the vile and greedy attachment to the gain that he has already accumulated.

I have said that the English were less delicate than we are. Form your own opinion; at this moment, the superb cabinet of Sir * * * * *, a man of great family, is shewn in London at a guinea a head *; a method imagined for paying

* Presuming that the authoress here alludes to the cabinet of the late Sir Aston Lever, she has certainly fallen into an error. The Leverian Museum, as is well known, was disposed of by lottery; and, the purchasers of tickets having free admission to it, till the drawing was over, Madame de Genlis has, in all probability, been led to imagine that the sum of one guinea was paid for admission only; without considering, that it was for a chance of becoming the winner of this most valuable collection of curiosities.

~~Translator's Note.~~

his

his debts ; and no one here thinks this extraordinary. What should we say in France, if the Count de * * * *, or the Marquis de * * *, who have such fine pictures, were to recur to a similar expedient for the settlement of their affairs? They would be degraded in the eyes of every one : but a real evil is, that they are not degraded in not paying their creditors.

The English, in society, are less alive to feeling than we are, less sensible to calumny, to injurious language, to every thing that affects honour and reputation. Their speeches and their public disputes in parliament, in imitation of those of the Greeks, are full of abuse, and formal contradictions. The liberty of the press exposes them daily to see themselves calumniated in the most shameful manner ; their laws even do not allow of divorces, but on conditions considered as disgraceful among us ; and divorced women are not banished:

banished from society *. The English therefore, probably, oppose almost always no more than a cold contempt to the things which most excite our indignation and resentment.

In England, there is very little sociability, because a person must be formally invited, in order to dine or sup at the house of his intimate friends; and because the women are much separated from the men by their duty in parliament, by their clubs, and by the fondness of the men for the pleasures of the table. The English, in general, love drinking; and it is precisely because their country produces no wine, that they pique themselves on having good wines and of several sorts, and on making their guests drink freely.

Besides, the pleasure of talking politics also contributes to make them fond of

* To borrow the words of Sterne, it cannot be denied that "they order this matter better in France."

—*Translator.*

sitting long at table, and of frequenting clubs. Therefore, as long as they have the happiness to preserve their constitution, they will never give up much of their time to women, the more especially as entering late into life, the society of women can never be necessary to them. The English women are, at first sight, cold and timid; they improve on acquaintance. I love a cold exterior in men: sensibility, when concentrated, is much more profound than that which is diffused in demonstrations; the one gains consistence, by being confined; the other, by being lavished, evaporates. Women, formed solely for gentle and moderate affections (for violent feelings lead them astray), ought to possess manners more attractive. The expression of benevolence, sweetness and sentiment, is one of their distinctive characteristics; it can so well assimilate with bashfulness, candour, and modesty. Of this Pauline is an instance.

To

To please; is, for women, a duty and a necessity; therefore a cold and austere air is not that which suits them. But men are formed to undertake great things, to govern their country, to defend it, to protect innocence and weakness; what becomes them best is a sort of grave dignity; it seems to me that frivolity, the jargon of gallantry, the want of character and undecided sentiments, are, in them, irregularities and failings of the most disgusting nature. And, indeed, I am of opinion that Englishmen, when they are estimable, sensible, and well-bred, and have spent a few years in the great world, are the men of Europe who unite the manners, the *ton*, and the outward appearance that best suit their sex. You may well suppose that I am speaking only in general, and that I certainly do not think that no Frenchman or other foreigner can have this kind of merit: though at the same time I think

English

English coxcombs are completely insufferable. They imagine that fashionable behaviour consists in running down every thing, and in manifesting nothing but disdain and indifference; and thus it is that, to folly, they join insipidity and impertinence. It must be admitted, our well-bred coxcombs are the least ridiculous of their species; it is proper that they should have become the models of coxcombs of almost all other nations. They are infinitely less preposterous and less absurd than the English coxcombs; it requires some discernment to rank them quickly in their class; for they are destitute neither of politeness nor graces, and they certainly bear no resemblance to the *petits-mâtres* exhibited in plays and on the stage.

The women here are, in general, better educated than ours, especially those who are rich, because there are no convents,
because

because they are not put to schools, which are considered as low *; and because, in short, mothers educate their daughters, which will always be an inestimable advantage. However, young girls are introduced very early into company, and they there acquire a fondness for play. But for this inconvenience, which is a most serious one, it might be predicted with certainty, that twenty years hence the English women would, in agreeable talents and literature, have a very decided superiority over the men. Separated from the men, and taking no part in public affairs, they have much more time for study and improvement. Enlightened mothers always bringing up their own daughters and perfecting education more and more, while the universities of Oxford and Cambridge form youth

* These schools, although bad in many respects, are, without comparison, the best that I have seen in any country.—*Note of the Editor.*

with

with their old routine, it is probable that the taste for the arts and for literature, will no longer be found but among the women. There are, in England, at this moment, more than ten women who write with reputation and in every style; and they likewise cultivate the arts with very brilliant success. However, this nation so estimable, so sensible, and which has produced so many great men, has, till the end of this century, displayed but very little genius for the arts. Architecture, as I have already said, is here in a state of mediocrity; the fine pieces of sculpture that may be quoted are the work of Frenchmen or Germans, and I know no great historical painter but *West*, who is still living.

I say nothing to you of English literature: you are well acquainted with it, and you are enabled to appreciate all its value. I shall only tell you, that there are here a prodigious number of sumptuous libraries,
and

and that the public reading-rooms are the best arranged in Europe.

Travellers boast much of the agriculture of this country, and assert that the people who inhabit it, are cruel and ferocious. I am by no means of their opinion. I have visited almost all the counties in England, and I saw a great part of them uncultivated. With respect to the people, I know none less clownish, more generous, or better informed; it is very common, in the poorest cottages, to meet with peasants, who read Shakespeare; and we certainly have never seen ours read Pierre Corneille. Here no profession, decent in itself, appears contemptible; every individual enjoys his *dignity of man*. And, indeed, the people here must not be treated as we treat them in France; the post-boys, the inn-keepers, &c. would not put up with treatment to which ours are accustomed. Every Englishman is proud of his country: a noble sentiment

which alone forms the panegyric of a nation, by proving, at once, both its greatness and the excellence of its constitution. In short, the rich farmers of England undoubtedly form the most virtuous and the most respectable class of men, that can be found in any country.

We have long remarked, in the course of our reading, that the English, in their manners and in their customs, bear an infinite resemblance to the ancient Greeks. The reason of this may be attributed to the profound study of the ancient authors, which occupies all the youth in the universities; but who could explain why the true character of physical beauty has found its way from the mild climate of Greece to the moist and cloudy sky of England? The country-places here are peopled by peasants who shew us, at every step, the style of beauty of the antique statues. What we call an *English face*, is no other than a *Grecian face*. I have met
with

with a prodigious number of young girls who resembled Léocadie, that is to say, who have the features and the cast of countenance of the heads of the family of Niobe. This fully proves that climate has not so great an influence on physical form as is imagined.

I have been frequently to the play, where I admired Mrs. Siddons, a sublime and charming actress, of whom every one must be passionately fond, if he be not devoid of taste and sensibility *. However,

* We cannot avoid expressing our astonishment that Madame de Genlis, when making a comparison between the French and English stage, and lavishing encomiums on Mrs. Siddons, should withhold the meed of praise from the French *Melpomene* of that day, Mademoiselle Dumefnil, whose only guide was Nature, and who, by not deviating from her, in order to gratify the caprice of fashion, snatched "a grace beyond the reach of art," and never failed to fascinate her audience. This celebrated actress has, some time since, retired from public life.—In comedy too, our authoress might proudly have thrown down

ever, I think, in tragedy, the gestures and attitudes of the actors is disagreeably monotonous. Our good actors are far superior to them in this respect; but their heroes of the stage kill themselves much more naturally than ours; an arm-chair is not brought to them, they do not throw themselves into the arms of a confidant; but they fall as they stand, in a frightful manner, which produces the greatest illusion. Their inflexions appeared to me similar to those by which we express the same passions; the heart, no doubt, has but one language, and when it is *that* which prompts the speaker, every foreign idiom becomes intelligible. The management of the stage decorations is by no means brought to perfection in England;

the gauntlet, and quoted the French *Thalia*, Mademoiselle Contat, to whose powers, in this line, the English stage can produce no equal.—*Translator's note.*

I was

I was much shocked to see continually the back scene forming the sky, placed so awkwardly as to intercept the summit of the trees, the perspective very ill kept, and two gilt doors remaining constantly on the front part of the stage, even when the scene represents a landscape or a forest; a strange custom which destroys all illusion*.

It remains for me to speak to you of the English gardens; I find them still superior to their reputation. That which Waller, the poet, formerly possessed at Beaconsfield, appears to me one of the handsomest and most picturesque. In these fine gardens nothing is imitated but Nature, sober and majestic, and not wild Nature, exhibiting only the image of chaos. What is called the *ornamental part*,

* We must admit the justness of this remark: to suffer gilt doors to remain on the stage, as an appendage to forest scenery, is an absurdity too gross to escape the eye even of a boorish peasant.—*Translator*.

which lies near the house, is symmetrical, and presents all the riches of art. Then, by degrees, symmetry is deranged; the hand of man is withdrawn and disappears; you come to the *wild part*; you no longer see any thing but Nature, yet dressed in all her charms, and shewing herself in all her grandeur and variety.

However, the English did not, in their first essays, attain this point of perfection; they began, like us, by overloading their gardens with buildings; and I hope that we shall, like them, end by lopping off in order to embellish. True it is, that this kind of garden requires a vast piece of ground; but when we have it not, we must confine ourselves to the old French taste, or at least prohibit ridiculous *bridges* over a rivulet, and all the ornaments which, placed in a small space, present only the aspect of a magazine of stage decorations.

You know that I was always partial to the English: can we help admiring this great nation,

nation, when we are read in their history, and well acquainted with their literature? But, in order to appreciate justly the English, a foreigner must have studied them in their own country. Of all civilized people, they have the fewest hurtful prejudices, and the most frankness and generosity.

Adieu, my dear Pauline, I shall set out in a few days, and shall certainly be at Erneville before the 25th of this month. My health is mended; and I hope, that in future, it will permit me to fix myself where I would always wish to be, with Pauline and our children.

LETTER XLVIII.

From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS.

Erneville, November 21.

I HAVE just received a letter from Albert, which announces to me his speedy return. This letter fills nine pages ; but he there speaks to me of nothing but England ! Formerly he wrote me letters still longer, in which he spoke to me of nothing but his own feelings ! . . . Oh ! how times are altered !

I write to you only a word, my dear friend, to tell you that, as I daily expect Albert, I cannot come and see you the day after to-morrow, as I had promised. But certainly, in the course of next week, I shall require you to make me amends for this sacrifice.

LETTER XLIX.

*From the CHEVALIER DE CELTAS to
MONSIEUR D'ORGEVAL.*

Autun, December 17.

I KNOW, my dear d'Orgeval, that your brother is returned; I congratulate you on it. In our town it is asserted that he is still very much altered, and that he will as long as he lives, feel the terrible wound which he received in his duel with St. Méran. But what says *the tender-hearted Pauline* to all this?

Our new bishop is come; he is a bigot and a hypocrite, who obtained this bishopric, because he was, for ten years, the tutor to the Dutchesse de Rosmond's son, and the *pimp* to her husband and the Countess

de Rosmond, an artful designing woman of gallantry, who had, for her first lover, the Duke, her brother.

I hope that I shall be able to make a tour into your neighbourhood in the month of January. I shall spend a week with you.

Adieu, my dear fellow; pray write to me a little oftener; you know how much I love your letters, and your style of writing, which is truly remarkable for its great precision, natural ease, and striking originality.

LETTER L.

From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS.

January 8.

THE *anonymous new-year's gift* arrived to-day. It is a capital box of colours, of red japan, mounted in gold, and accompanied by a pasteboard box full of crayons, vellum, pieces of ivory for painting, and camel-hair pencils.

Therefore Léocadie's vision is only a reverie, her mother is not dead; so, for this once, we will have no faith in ghosts.

This unknown mother must certainly have a secret method of learning what are Léocadie's occupations. Albert, on seeing this last present, said with an ill-natured smile: "The anonymous mother,

“ has, no doubt, a familiar spirit that visits this house, and informs her of every thing that is going on in it; but for this, would she have divined that Léocadie paints in water-colours and in miniature?” To this remark I knew not what answer to make; and, according to my custom, I blushed, for I easily penetrated his thoughts; and suspicions and probability throw me into as much embarrassment as guilt could occasion! Can you conceive, my dear friend, that there are culpable women who no longer blush, when the mere idea of an injustice can, without any foundation, inspire me with this involuntary confusion? How frequently must this timid embarrassment of a delicate and feeling mind have led to the condemnation of innocence! Magistrates and judges consider confusion and blushing as tacit avowals of guilt; and, from indications so deceitful, they decide on the reputation, the fate, and the life of men!

men! If interrogated legally concerning the criminal weakness which is imputed to me, not only should I have blushed, and turned pale; but I am sure that I should have fainted! How support with coolness this frightful appearance of infamy!

One of the ancients called the blushing, inspired by bashfulness or embarrassment, *the colour of virtue*. I love this expression, and I have my reasons. I know that a well-founded shame can make a person blush; but I think that every one who blushes at his faults is not depraved; and I think too, that persons always possess candour and a refined soul, who have preserved the habit of blushing easily, when they have passed their early youth.

Zéphyrine is still with us, and I believe that her mother is very much inclined to leave her with me altogether. I am extremely fond of this child. Albert has declared to me that, at the bottom of his heart,

heart, he intended Maurice for her, and that, without having entered into a formal engagement, he had given this hope to his brother. I have no objection to make against this project, the more especially as, even in point of fortune, Zéphyrine being an only daughter, will be a very good match. I own to you that, frequently in spite of myself, another idea occurs to my mind the more strongly as it might wholly exculpate me ! But I could not communicate it till Léocadie is of an age to justify it by her personal qualifications, and it is upwards of two years since Albert confided to me his views concerning Zéphyrine. After this confidence, my proposal would appear to him only an artifice, the rather as every day seems to attach him more to his design, and as he is continually repeating to me that his niece is the only daughter-in-law that can suit his taste. On the other hand, Maurice, set on by him, has already this
idea

idea (a thing which I highly disapproved), and he shews, for his cousin, all the attachment that any one can have at thirteen. The little girl too suspects that he is intended for her husband ! So then it is already too late to think of a project which, in every way, would have insured the happiness of my life ! However, I have required from Albert, that at least he would enter into no positive engagement, for seven or eight years. From this time to that, who knows what may happen ? This delay leaves me at least a faint ray of hope ; and it is a great point gained, to be able to preserve, for some years, so sweet a chimera !

Dear Léocadie ! what will be thy fate ! When I think that so charming a creature will, probably, not have an opportunity of being advantageously settled, how I hate avarice, ambition, and all the prejudices of birth !

Confess,

Confess, my dear friend, that affection does not deceive me, and that there exists not a child of eleven years old who can be compared to her ! She has as much quickness as candour; notwithstanding her playfulness, I am never afraid of her indiscretion in little things that I wish to conceal; she divines or partly sees them, and knows how to be silent; she even penetrates what often she does not comprehend; an instinct of feeling, equally singular and delicate, makes her know my intentions and my fears; and, without any questions on her part, without any explanations on mine, she is always for me in the smallest details a clear-sighted and faithful confidant. Poor little girl ! The innocent cause of my misfortunes, she will console and indemnify me for them.

Adieu, my dear friend, do not mention this to any person whatever; I tell you all my secret thoughts, convinced that these reveries will go no farther than ourselves.

LETTER LI.

*From the COUNTESS DE ROSMOND to the
BISHOP of AUTUN.*

La M^{re}, April 1.

I AM delighted, my respectable friend, at your being pleased with the province where you are going to settle for life. I know that, in fact, the situation of Autun is picturesque and exceedingly beautiful.

As you are going to make the visitation of your diocese, I wish to speak to you of an interesting woman unworthily calumniated, on whom you will certainly call; I mean the Marchioness d'Erneville.

By

By a singular chain of circumstances, I have acquired the most positive proofs of her innocence. The young girl whom she is bringing up, and who is called Léocadie, is no relation to her; however, envy and malice have converted this act of benevolence, into the most criminal weakness. The marks of esteem of a person like you, may, if not do away unjust prepossessions, at least contribute to weaken them. The most noble privilege of happy and acknowledged virtue, is to have sufficient weight to be able to justify oppressed innocence.

Madame d'Erneville is the most virtuous of women; her purity is that of an angel; this is what I am certain of; I cannot inform you of things that are connected with secrets which are entrusted to me, and which, consequently, it is impossible for me to reveal. But you know my sincerity; and you will believe me
without

without any other explanation, the more especially as I am not a friend of Madame d'Erneville, since I am not at all acquainted with her personally, and I have never had with her the smallest connexion, even of an indirect nature.

Jules thinks of you with regret; we console ourselves by reflecting on the good that you will do, and by recalling to mind your advice, your lessons, and your example.

I have obtained from my brother what I wished. Jules will go into the regiment of ***, which is to be quartered for the next four or five years at Moulins; so he will always be able, every year, to pass with you a fortnight and sometimes more. He participates in all the joy that this arrangement occasions me. Adieu, my dearest and most revered friend!

When you have seen Madame d'Erneville, write to me your opinion of her and her family; you know how fond I am of children,

children, and she is, they say, giving so good an education to those whom she is bringing up, that I could wish to learn every particular.

Agnes desires me to assure you of her respectful attachment.

LETTER LII.

The BISHOP of AUTUN's Answer.

May 25.

I HAVE, Madam, just finished the visitation of this extensive diocese. I have been to Erneville, where I confirmed the children both of the castle and of the village; and I passed three very agreeable days in this mansion, which more than once reminded me of that of La M* *.

Your

Your testimony will ever fix my opinion; but even had you not mentioned to me the Marchioness d'Erneville, I should have done very naturally all that you require of me. Wherever I see actual regularity of conduct, I suppose virtue; and as repentance may bestow it as well as innocence, old scandal, however unanimously admitted, and perfectly proved, would not prevent me from making this charitable supposition. But this evangelical precept is by no means applicable to Madame d'Erneville. Not only is there nothing proved against her; but she is accused on no more than *hear-say*, on conjectures, and those who traduce her are evidently animated by hatred or envy. Scarcely had I been a week at Autun, when several persons wished to prepossess me against her. I refused to listen to them, contenting myself with asking whether she lived on good terms with her husband, and fulfilled the exterior duties of religion. They were

unable to deny these two facts, and I would hear no more of the matter.

I intended to stay only a few hours at Erneville; but I accepted with pleasure the invitation of the master and mistress of the house. The closest union appears to reign between the husband and the wife; and every thing in this mansion bespeaks order, kindness, and virtue. The children are charming, and well brought up. The adopted young girl is extremely interesting. She is in her twelfth year. I interrogated her on religion, and I found in her so much information and piety, that I think her qualified to make her first communion; but Madame d'Erneville wishes her not to make it till the day that she is thirteen years of age, because, on that solemn day, she will inform her of the misfortune of her birth, of which she has not at present the smallest idea.

I was edified by the beneficence of Monsieur and Madame d'Erneville, who
have

have formed in their village some excellent charitable institutions; among others, a school for poor girls, which may serve as a model for all establishments of this kind. Young Léocadie is already under the eyes of her adoptive mother, one of the governesses of the young female orphans. She has even just taken, to be about her person, one of them, whom she treats as a favourite companion. I also found there a worthy rector, who related to me the most affecting traits of the kindness of the lord and lady of the mansion. In a word, I was really charmed at all that I saw and observed in this place.

On my return to Autun, I failed not to speak in praise of the Marquis and Marchioness before the very people who had endeavoured to speak ill of them to me. This is an allowable piece of mischief when it accords with truth; and I own that, independently of the sentiment of justice which inclines me to do it, I find
in

in it a particular satisfaction ; it is so pleasing to humble and disappoint enviers and calumniators !

Adieu, Madam, notwithstanding your disinclination to travelling, I still dare hope that you will come to Autun ; gratitude and friendship will receive you here with so much rapture. Besides, you will here find mountains, rocks, Roman antiquities ; and, in short, the most sincere and most devoted of friends. I entreat the kind and tender-hearted Agnes to second me in the wish that I have to draw you into Burgundy ; I hope too that Jules will serve me in this to the utmost of his power.

LETTER LIII.

From MADAME D'ORGEVAL *to the*
CHEVALIER DE CELTAS.

Erneville, September 4.

I CAN easily guess from what quarter you picked up the impertinent story respecting me.

I took the liberty of laughing at the amours of Mademoiselle Verrier and Monsieur Remi; I wished in vain to dissuade Mademoiselle Verrier from the intention of marrying a man without any fortune, and who has no other merit than that of readily making bad verses; and, for this, Mademoiselle Verrier has taken an aversion to me. It is certainly she who told you that young Sauval is in love with me,

and that I return his passion. It seems to me that you ought to know me sufficiently not to believe, at most, more than half of this fable. I am not now at a time of life to form new engagements; yet, if I wished to take a lover, I might, if I pleased, make a more elevated choice. This young man is entertaining; he has the talent of mimicking; Mademoiselle Verrier does not forgive him for having employed it in regard to her and her lover; true it is that I laughed, till I cried, at a scene which he acted one evening at our house, and in which he imitated to perfection, the pedantry of Remi, the sentimental and *childish* air of Mademoiselle Verrier, and the *half and half* manner and jealousy of Mademoiselle du Rocher. In short, I have sat to him for my picture, and I have given it to my husband. I see nothing very scandalous in all this; but you are become so *austere* towards me! You have long been seeking a quarrel with me.

me. Since your *intimate connexion* with Madame de Bel***, I no longer know you to be the same. Be a little more yourself again; and, perhaps, you will be more consistent and more equitable.

I am at Erneville, and I shall spend here a few days. There is nothing new in this mansion, except that the company is increased by a little female *companion*, given for some months past to Léocadie. This little girl, who is called *Mina*, is taken from the charity school in the village. She is of the same age as Léocadie, and smart enough; she is a pupil of my sister-in-law, and also a *foundling*, not found in a closet, but at the gate of the castle. Pauline is very fond of her; she has an affection truly *maternal* for all bastards.

What do you say of the long visit that our bishop paid here? My sister-in-law asserts that he is a man of understanding, and of sublime merit and piety. I took good care not to say that I knew, from

you, that this illustrious prelate was nothing more than a fool and a hypocrite.

Zéphyrine grows tall ; but I do not think that she grows handsome. You are in the right ; she will be made a *précieuse ridicule**, and be taught to be deceitful into the bargain ; she already deals in flattery to a surprising excess towards Pauline and the *idol* ; but she shall marry Maurice. This boy is amiable and very handsome.

My brother-in-law is still as melancholy as ever. His health is very much impaired since the *subterraneous duel* ; it is said that, in consequence of it, he has still an open wound which makes him suffer greatly ; but, through an incomprehensible whim, since this adventure he has grown so fond of the cave that he has

* An absurd, finical, prude : this appellation is borrowed from a celebrated dramatic piece written by *Molière*, and entitled, *Les Précieuses Ridicules*.—*Translator*.

caused all sorts of embellishments to be made in it. The road to it is gravelled, and the open place is much ornamented; the rock is entirely surrounded by flowers; evergreens, firs, and cypresses, have also been planted there; and a seat, covered with moss, has been made on the summit of the rock. Albert calls this solitary place *his study*; he works there, he says, with less absence of mind than any where else; he goes thither every day; it is even asserted that he frequently passes the night there. In short, the mouth of the cave next to the castle is now closed by a gate, of which he alone has a key, so that the persons belonging to the family cannot enter it but by making a long circuit to the *port du Fourneau*. Can you conceive the meaning of all this? I think that it is to bewilder people in regard to the story of the duel. But these are strange

tricks, which will make no change in any one's opinion.

Adieu; I beg you, in future, to be less fond of giving lectures, and, above all, to be less unjust.

Sept. 5.

My letter was going to be sent; I open it again to tell you a thing that to me appears surprising. I heard the smacking of whips, and presently the noise of a post-chaise which entered the court. I put my head out of the window, I saw on the steps Albert and Pauline, receiving with open arms the man who alighted from the carriage. Guess who this man was. the Viscount de St. Méran! Probably, our bishop has preached up here *the pardon of injuries*; and this sermon has, as you see, made a profound impression on Albert's mind.

However,

However, St. Méran has the most free, easy, and friendly air. The Marquis embraced him very cordially. Pauline held out her hand to him with that *air of feeling* reserved for great occasions. A messenger was dispatched to Gilly; the philosopher posted hither this evening, in order to participate in the joy of his friends One must come here to see singular things.

Adieu; acknowledge the receipt of this letter.

LETTER LIV.

*From the MARCHIONESS to MONSIEUR
D'ORGEVAL.*

Erneville, February 5.

ALBERT set out the day before yesterday in the morning for Dijon; but I know his sentiments, and I will do in regard to you, my dear brother, every thing that he would do himself if he were here. I shall employ all the influence that friendship can give, in order to incline you to mildness and clemency. Consider, my dear brother, that of all things, at your age and Madame d'Orgeval's, a rupture would be dreadful, and might be prejudicial to the establishment of Zéphyrine. I know Albert's projects respecting this amiable girl,

girl, and I shall tell you, without any subterfuge, *that a mother publicly dishonoured* might make him renounce them. Consider, in short, that Monsieur Dupui is still living, and that a violent proceeding would embitter his old age. . . . Come, my dear brother, I conjure you, come at least and hear me ! Allow me to tell you that it is your blind confidence in the most contemptible of men that has occasioned all your misfortunes. . . . Come, in the name of heaven, before you take any determination ! Come and listen to a sister, a sincere friend, who expects you with the most lively impatience and a heart penetrated with sorrow.

LETTER LV.

From the same to MONSIEUR DU RESNEL.

February 9.

You will be surpris'd, Sir, to receive a letter from me, and by an exprefs; but it is an unlucky event that obliges me to write to you. Young Sauval, through a series of misconduct, the detail of which would be too long, has expos'd my sister-in-law in a very unpleasant manner. I ask you as a favour not to make him, on this head, any sort of reproach; but tell him merely that some unexpected business forces me to interrupt for a time Léocadie's lessons. You know that the Bishop of Autun wishes to have an artist to repair the pictures of his cathedral; if you could
send

send Monsieur Sauval to Autun for two or three months, you would do me a very great pleasure. However, this is, at bottom, nothing more than a misunderstanding, which, I fully hope, will be of no prejudice to my sister-in-law. She proves to me, on this occasion, friendship, confidence, and frankness; I am deeply affected at this, and I flatter myself that my friends will share this sentiment, and the interest with which she inspires me.

Léocadie was waiting for Monsieur Sauval, in order to finish the head that she intends for you; but she is very able to finish it alone, and you shall have it shortly. Believe me, Sir, the mother and daughter feel a great pleasure in employing themselves for such a friend as you.

The Baroness, who is here, desires me to tell you that she still expects you on Saturday; she will be at home on Friday evening.

LETTER LVI.

MONSIEUR DU RESNEL's *Answer.*

Gilly, February 9.

YOUR commands are obeyed, Madam; Sauval will set off to-morrow at five o'clock in the morning, and he will not return from Autun till the course of the month of May.

I *knew* all two hours before I received your note. Sauval, dismayed and *truly* penitent, had told me the scandalous story which an *angel* of goodness calls nothing more than a *misunderstanding*.

Your friends, Madam, ought, in this, to conform their conduct to yours; but, in adoring your generosity, it is allowable for them, in this adventure, to recognize,
with

with pleasure, Providence, who punishes the enviers and detractors of virtue, and prompts the interesting object of the most shameful calumnies to act so noble a part ! . . . I dare not tell you more ; but, on Saturday, I will make myself amends for this reserve with Madame de Vordac ; you will not be there, Madam, to *restrain* us.

Be so good, Madam, as to undertake to thank for me the amiable and dear Léocadie ; she knows the value that I attach to her performances, and how necessary her friendship is to my happiness.

LETTER LVII.

*From the BARONESS DE VORDAC to the
COUNTESS D'ERNEVILLE.*

Erneville-castle, February 12.

HERE is another occasion, Madam, in which I will not be useless to you. I have seen the letter that Pauline has written to you respecting the disastrous history of Madame d'Orgeval, and the latter well merits an historian more *exact* and less laconic. Attend, then, Madam, to a faithful and circumstantial account.

Last Sunday, Pauline, the children and myself, returned from high mass; it was ten o'clock in the morning; the children began playing at battledore and shuttlecock; we left the Baron with them, and

I fol-

I followed Pauline into her cabinet, where we wished to finish a book that we had begun reading the day before. Scarcely were we seated, when we saw the door fly open, and Madame d'Orgeval make her appearance, but pale, trembling, with her hair dishevelled, and a face truly discomposed. She threw herself into a chair without saying a word. "Good God!" sister," cried Pauline, "what brings you "hither? Has your carriage broken "down? What has happened to you?" —"No, sister," replied Madame d'Orgeval, "I am come to ask you if you can, "if you will serve me? I am very "unfortunate!" —"Ah, my dear sister! "speak, what can I do?" At these words I got up, and made some steps towards the door, in order to leave the room: . . . "No, Madam," said Madame d'Orgeval, stopping me, "you may stay; my sister "conceals nothing from you; and, be- "sides, what I have to say, thanks to the
— "folly

“folly of Monsieur d’Orgeval, will be public
“in two days.” This strange preamble petrified Pauline and me. We kept silence for a moment, and, during that time, Madame d’Orgeval walked about the room with a theatrical and tragic air, but without shedding a tear.

At length Pauline resuming the conversation: “Dear Denise,” said she, “you must needs think that I would not entrust even to Madame de Vordac secrets which are not my own.”—“No matter,” rejoined Madame d’Orgeval, “she may stay.” I own to you, Madam, that I desired nothing better; and I again sat down in my chair. Madame d’Orgeval double locked the door, left the key in it, took a chair, sat down opposite to us, drew near her a small table on which she threw her gloves, and all this with the most abrupt movements, and a look of anger and indignation. Then she said to us, but still without shedding a tear: “I
“am

“ am the victim of an atrocious act of trea-
“ chery ; that infamous hussy Mademoi-
“ selle Verrier has involved me in an ir-
“ reconcileable quarrel with Monsieur
“ d’Orgeval ! ” — “ O ! heaven ! ” — “ I will
“ tell you all without any farther preamble ;
“ I have some firmness, and, whatever may
“ be the consequence, I will not be dis-
“ concerted.” — “ My God ! sister, explain
“ yourself ! ” — “ After all, an error of
“ youth is not an unpardonable crime ! ”
— “ As for *me*, I did not marry for love.
“ Inclination is not to be commanded.
“ The Chevalier de Celtas, from the very
“ beginning of my marriage, had for me
“ a violent passion. Urged by the advice
“ of Mademoiselle Verrier, I returned it ;
“ we wrote to each other privately ; Ma-
“ demoiselle Verrier undertook to deliver
“ our letters. She once told us, that, in
“ opening a packet which she received
“ from me, the letter I sent her for the
“ Chevalier had fallen into a lighted
“ brasier,

“braſier, and was burnt. This is eleven
“or twelve years ago. The fact is, that
“little Verrier had miſlaid this letter, that
“afterwards ſhe found it again, and had
“the baſeneſs to keep it, apparently to uſe
“it as a weapon againſt me in caſe of our
“falling out. . . . Oh ! ſhe’s a monſter ! ſhe’s
“an abominable creature !” After
theſe exclamations, Madame d’Orgeval,
very much out of breath, made a little
pause. I looked at Pauline. . . . I found
myſelf in the ſituation in which Hercules
has frequently been painted ; I was *between*
vice and virtue. Oh ! how ſublime did
virtue then appear to me ! How handſome
and affecting was Pauline ! her eyes
were caſt down, the moſt lively carnation
coloured her cheeks ! her counte-
nance, in pouring a painful embarraſſ-
ment, had ſomething impoſing which
ſhe has not in common ; for indignation
never ſhewed itſelf on that ſweet face by
the expreſſion of diſdain ; it is there ma-
nifeſted

nifested only by the coldest and most serious air, and by an increase of dignity.

In the mean time Madame d'Orgeval resumed her narrative: "In short, sister,"
"continued she, "Monsieur d'Orgeval went
"yesterday to Luzi; he intended to spend
"three days there; but in the evening
"he saw Mademoiselle Verrier, who had
"the infamy to deliver him that old letter
"which I have before mentioned to you.
"On this Monsieur d'Orgeval, in a rage,
"came back to * * *. He did not arrive
"till three o'clock in the morning. You
"must know that, the evening before,
"Monsieur Sauval, without having given
"me the smallest intimation, had arrived
"at supper-time; he was ignorant of the
"absence of both Monsieur d'Orgeval
"and of my uncle, who is at Madame de
"T * * *'. However, I did not imagine
"that, at my age, there was any impropri-
"ety in receiving an artist into one's house.
"... After supper, we played at chess till
"two

“two o'clock; you know I love to sit up!
“..... Then I went to bed.... Mon-
“sieur Sauval still staid some time in the
“drawing-room; at last he went up to
“his own apartment, undressed himself,
“and, just as he was going to step into
“bed, he wished to drink, found no
“water, took the candle to look for
“some, and went down stairs. His candle
“went out, he lost himself in the galleries,
“and mistaking the door, he entered my
“chamber... I was just dropping asleep;
“I awoke; judge of my surprise on see-
“ing, in my room, Monsieur Sauval in
“his shirt. He was full as much asto-
“nished as I, and was making a preci-
“pitate retreat, when all at once Monsieur
“d'Orgeval made his appearance. As I
“saw his fury, I jumped out of bed to
“restrain him, while Monsieur Sauval
“made his escape.... Monsieur d'Orge-
“val thinks there is something shocking
“in this story, which is certainly very in-
“nocent.

“nocent. Fortunately my uncle was not
“at home, and will not return till to-
“morrow. Monsieur d’Orgeval made
“such an uproar that all our servants heard
“his cries. . . . I have got away; and I am
“come to beg you, sister, to make Mon-
“sieur d’Orgeval, if possible, listen to
“reason. If he succeeds in traducing me
“to my uncle, will he be the better for it,
“when I am disinherited? . . . I know,
“my dear sister, that you are good and
“generous: I assure you, that if you have
“not been pleased with me sometimes, it
“was not my fault, but solely Monsieur
“d’Orgeval’s. If you knew the quarrels
“that we have had on that subject!”—
“Don’t trouble yourself about me,” in-
terrupted Pauline coolly; “the question
“is to serve you. Be very certain that
“I will do every thing in my power for
“you.” Pauline immediately began writ-
ing to her brother-in-law. During this
time, Madame d’Orgeval wished to fawn

on me ; but I received these little cajoler-ies rather drily. A messenger was dispatched to Monsieur d'Orgeval, who, in consequence of the entreaties of his sister-in-law, arrived at Erneville at eight o'clock in the evening. Pauline's note had fortunately prevented him from having the folly to inform Monsieur Dupui of these pretty events ; but he had written to the Chevalier de Celtas a thundering epistle, in which he told him, among other things, that he was *a fool, a knave, and a coxcomb*. This portrait is not drawn with neatness and delicacy ; but it has a precision that pleases me, and I find it a very strong likeness ; for, notwithstanding the phrases of the Chevalier de Celtas, he has, at bottom, very little understanding ; he displays flattery without graces, a false gaiety which always degenerates into irony, a continual taste for playing on words, and eternally bragging of his own merits, and a puerile pride that shews itself awkwardly in the most trifling

trifling things; all this forms a detestable character with very slender abilities.

Pauline at first saw, in private, Monsieur d'Orgeval, who shewed her *the old love letter*, which is so clear that it leaves no doubt and is full of raillery on the blindness and stupidity of Monsieur d'Orgeval. This, I assure you, is what made him most angry; he would easily have forgiven *this old sin*; but it is very hard to be no longer able to believe all those flattering encomiums bestowed, for fifteen years past, on his *penetration*, his *charming good-nature*, &c. As for the story of Sauval, the painter, even were Pauline to tell me again, with her solemn air, that it is blameable to repeat the conversation of a man over-ruled by anger, I will not conceal from you, Madam, that Monsieur d'Orgeval himself told me that he had found this artist *who was so innocently received*, not only in Madame d'Orgeval's room, but indulging

indulging himself much more at his ease. . . . Do not imagine that he was merely in an arm-chair ; no, Madam, better than that still ! I vow to God that I will not reveal this *little circumstance* but to Monsieur du Resnel ; certainly neither you nor he will make it public. This poor Sauval ran away from the house with nothing on but his shirt ; it was pouring with rain ; he went and took shelter in a cottage in the village ; there he dressed himself as a peasant, and, thus disguised, repaired to Gilly. He is now at Autun.

Monsieur d'Orgeval, after having thoroughly vented his fury, promised every thing that Pauline wished, consented to overlook, to conceal this adventure, to deny it if it were talked of, and, at last, to receive his wife. This interview was not very affecting ; Madame d'Orgeval displayed in it what she calls *firminess*, that is to say, an effrontery by no means common. It is certainly very remarkable that, in
all

all this, she had not for a moment tears in her eyes. She is a vile woman.

Now, Madam, let us enjoy the part, so worthy of herself, that Pauline has acted on this occasion ! What an angel ! . . . I owe this justice to Monsieur d'Orgeval, that, for the moment, at least, he was sensible of the value of the conduct of his sister-in-law ; I saw him really penetrated by it. . . . What remorse must be blended with this tender emotion ! Would you believe that Pauline seriously frets herself at this ridiculous story ? When *tête-à-tête* with her, I was indulging myself in joking about it. " Ah ! " said she to me, " this dreadful scandal makes me feel " more sensibly the misfortune of being " calumniated ; I might have honoured " the name that is tarnished ; I might have " balanced this disgrace ; and injustice " makes me share it ! " In this, Madam, you will discover her delicacy and her incomparable sensibility !

I forgot to tell you that Monsieur d'Orgeval has conjured Pauline to take entirely on herself the education of Zéphyrine ; he has even made this request one of the conditions of the reconciliation. However, this gives no concern to Madame d'Orgeval, who has never piqued herself on being an affectionate mother ; she does not love her daughter ; and, in a few years, she will have an aversion to her, because she will be jealous of her.

Adieu, Madam, if the Baron's health permits, we shall come to Dijon in the spring. I cannot make a more agreeable journey, since it is to procure me the happiness of seeing you.

LETTER LVIII.

From MONSIEUR SAUVAL *to* MONSIEUR
DU RESNEL.

Autun, May 3.

I HAVE the honour of sending you, by an opportunity that occurs, the views of the environs of Autun, which I drew from Nature. It is astonishing that there have not been engraved, more than once, the beautiful landscapes which are discovered from the mountain towards Châlons. This mountain, covered with trees and majestic rocks, is in itself the most picturesque thing that I have seen of the kind. I add, to these drawings, a view of the *Porte d'Arroux*, a fine piece of antiquity which

would likewise well deserve the honours of the graver.

Thanks to your recommendation, Sir, I have more work than I can finish. I have taken a great number of portraits. I have already painted *seven Dianas, six Floras, and four Vestals*, and a dozen warriors cuirassed and armed *cap-à-pié*. Lastly, I have restored the pictures of several churches. The bishop is very kind to me. This worthy prelate has no ostentation; he lives very frugally; but his charity is immense; he employs all his revenues in decorating the churches, supporting indigent artisans, and relieving the unfortunate of every description. I must relate to you of him, an anecdote which will bring you better acquainted with him than all my encomiums *.

Mademoi-

* The following story is not an invention; it is the exact account of an action of the virtuous Bishop of Nismes, at whose house I lived, on going to Nismes, in my way to Italy. I had this anecdote
from

Mademoiselles de L*** are two old maids of a very good family, whose father ruined himself; the bad state of his affairs was not known till his death, which happened about seven years ago. It then turned out that he had more debts than property; his two daughters gave up the whole to his creditors. They had remaining a small estate, which they inherited from their mother, and which they could lawfully retain; but they sold it in order to pay off every thing; and then they found themselves absolutely beggars; for they had sold even the smallest article of furniture, having solely reserved an old picture, representing St. Jerome, because their father loved this picture, which he had had for

from one of his grand-vicars. This very Bishop who, for forty years, never stirred out of his diocese, and whose knowledge equalled his piety, caused the high roads to be repaired at his own expense, established manufactories, enriched the town, and left in it no poor.

twenty years at his bedside. These virtuous ladies having too much greatness of mind to solicit, and even to accept relief, determined to live on the labour of their own hands; but this feeble resource could not, during seven years, afford them the mere necessaries of life, and they passed all that time in extreme indigence.

The present bishop, as soon as he was settled here, made the most minute inquiries respecting all the inhabitants of the town who might stand in need of assistance. Notwithstanding the obscurity, the silence, and the profound solitude of Mademoiselles de L * * *, he discovered their existence and their history; he learnt also that they were as interesting from their union, the purity of their whole life, and their eminent piety, as from their filial disinterestedness and affection for their parents. He sent to them one of his grand-vicars to offer them assistance, which they refused, saying merely that they had no want. The
bishop,

bishop, whom nothing can make renounce a good action, fully promised himself to find a method of extricating them from poverty, without wounding their delicacy.

Some time after, he heard that the proprietor of the house in which these ladies lived, refused to renew the lease of their small lodging, wishing to join their apartment to another, in order to let it to more advantage. On this, the bishop conceived an idea which he resolved to realize without delay. He sent for me, communicated to me his plan, and instructed me in the part that I was to act.

In consequence, I went, very early in the morning, to the house inhabited by Mademoiselles de L * * *. I told the proprietor that I wished to hire one of his apartments, and that, as a painter, I was particularly desirous of a good light ; so that the most elevated lodging would be that which would suit me the best. He took me to

the top of the house ; and, after having shewn me two small cabinets, he told me that he should join to them a pretty large room occupied by two old maids, who were to go out of it in a few days. I asked to see this room, and here was I ushered in to the Mademoiselles de L * * *. These two virtuous ladies were already at work : the one was embroidering, the other was finishing a shirt. Two poor little beds without curtains, an old commode, a large walnut-tree table, and two old straw-bottomed chairs formed all their furniture. Besides, the four walls, blackened by the smoke, exhibited no other decoration than the favourite picture in a black wooden frame, representing St. Jerome. On my appearance, these ladies rose up with a sort of confusion ; for, wishing to conceal their poverty, they never, unless in case of absolute necessity, suffered any one to enter their room. As for me, scarcely bowing to them, I appeared to
remark

remark nothing but the picture, which exactly faced the door ; and, while their landlord was explaining to them the subject of my visit, I stood motionless before St. Jerome. After two or three minutes' contemplation, I stepped a little on one side, in order to view the picture in a different light, and, at length, transported with admiration, I exclaimed, " Yes! . . . " certainly 'tis a *Dominichino*."—" Pardon me, Sir," said the elder sister to me, "'tis not a St. Dominic ; 'tis a St. Jerome, my late father's patron !"—" Made-moiselle," rejoined I, " this picture is painted by Dominichino, one of the greatest masters of the Italian school. It is a master-piece ! Allow me to take it down, in order to have a closer view of it." On saying these words, I took one of the chairs, I stepped on it, unhung the picture, and landed it on the floor. I then went on my knees, I spat

on the picture, I wiped it, I rubbed it with my pocket handkerchief, I got up again, I stepped back, I stepped forward, and, after all this manœuvring, I turned about, saying, "Mesdemoiselles, since you have
"carefully preserved this picture, you are
"not ignorant that it is one of the finest
"originals that exists?"—"Sir," answered one of the sisters, "my late father
"was very fond of it; this is the sole
"reason that made us keep it."—"Well,
"Mademoiselle, will you sell it?"—"Sir,
"this picture is extremely dear to us, &c."
—"But, Mademoiselle, do you know
"what you may have for it? Do you
"know what it is worth?"—"No, Sir,"
—"It is invaluable, Mademoiselle, I will
"not take advantage of your ignorance
"in that respect; yes, this picture is in-
"valuable; I offer you five hundred
"louis for it in ready money."—"Five
"hundred louis," exclaimed at once the
landlord

landlord and the two sisters.—“Yes,” continued I, “as much as that, and I am sure to sell it again for seven hundred on my arrival in Paris.”—“Upon my word,” said the landlord, approaching the St. Jerome, “I see very well now, that it is a capital painting, although it is very much blackened with smoke; but it is extraordinary that, till this day, no one suspected the merit of this picture.”—“This is a thing that often happens,” replied I, “the *Life of the Painters* is full of anecdotes of this kind.”—“Yes,” rejoined the landlord, “I remember to have read that a painter, in travelling, bought for a few louis, at an alehouse, a beer-sign, which he sold again for eight thousand livres.”

During this dialogue, the two sisters were whispering to each other. I begged them to give me an answer, and they told me that they consented to sell me this picture. I promised to return in two hours

with the money, and I left the house without farther delay. The landlord, who followed me, requested me to step into his apartments for a moment: "I have," said he to me, "a *St. Theresa* which devolved to me from my grandmother; do me the pleasure to look at it, as you are here. If, by chance, this too should be some master-piece; who knows?"—I was therefore under the necessity of examining the *St. Theresa*; it was nothing but a vile copy, though not quite so bad a one as the *St. Jerome*, and, after having candidly told him what I thought of it, I flew to the bishop's palace. The bishop was waiting for me with impatience in his cabinet: "My Lord," said I to him, "you have just purchased for five hundred louis a picture that is not worth twelve livres; the business is settled."—"Ah!" rejoined he, "this is the best bargain that I have ever made!" He immediately gave me the five hundred louis in bank notes,

notes, and I returned with them to Mesdemoiselles de L***. They were agreeably surprised on seeing me again ; they owned to me that they had thought I was laughing at them. When I displayed the notes, these poor old maids changed colour ; they were agitated and trembling I presented them with a handsome English pocket book of red morocco which belonged to me, begging them to accept it to put their notes in. They thanked me by an expressive look ; for it was out of their power to speak. When I took hold of the picture, to carry it away, they sighed, saying, "*Our poor father !*"—" Mesdemoiselles," said I to them, " piety towards your parents makes you regret this picture ; but I give you my word that I will make you a copy of it which shall be a perfect resemblance ; I will set about it directly ; you shall have it in a fortnight." At these words, the two excellent old maids embraced

braced each other, at the same time melting into tears "Ah ! Sir," said they to me, "we shall pray to God for you "every day of our life before this "picture !" . . . How I regretted not to be able to tell them the truth, and to be forced to conceal from them the name of their benefactor !

I deposited at the bishop's palace this valuable purchase. The bishop contemplated this picture with eyes of complaisance Never did a passionately fond *amateur* receive with more pleasure a capital picture that had long been wished for ! He told me that he should place it in his *oratory*. "My Lord," answered I, "if you compose a sermon on charity, "without ostentation, it is before this picture that you must write it ; you will "then be inspired with sublime ideas."

I have kept my promise ; I have made a tolerably handsome copy of this vile picture, which the bishop lent me for three weeks.

weeks. Every one believes that I really purchased it. Several pretended connoisseurs came to see it in my apartments ; among others, the Chevalier de Celtas, who amused me exceedingly by his aping the *amateur*. He eyed the picture in every direction with a scientific air so ludicrous, that it required a great command over myself not to burst out a laughing. He said very gravely that it was the finest *Dominichino* he had ever seen. I asked him what he thought of my copy ; he answered me that it was very pleasing, that I had seized the manner of the original ; but that I had not quite given the *vigour of the shades* and *the expression of the countenance*. (I could wish, Sir, that you had seen *this expression* !) Nothing amuses an artist like the folly of people of fashion, who, without any knowledge of the arts, have such pretensions.

I carried my copy to the good old maids, who are now as happy as they deserve

serve to be. I go to see them sometimes; it is to me a very agreeable sight. I am certain that this story will give you pleasure; but I conjure you, Sir, not to spread it, for the bishop would not forgive me for divulging it.

I wait your commands to return to Gilly. Has not my exile been sufficiently long? I am more than ever sensible how much I have to repair! . . . I dare assure you, Sir, that in future you shall be satisfied with my conduct.

I am, with respect, Sir, &c.

LETTER LIX.

From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS
DE VORDAC.

Erneville, February 21.

Yes, my dear friend, to-morrow is a grand day ! it will be my Léocadie's birthday ! To-morrow she will be thirteen years old, to-morrow she will make her first communion, and to-morrow she will learn that she has yet another mother ! I have already apprized her that I should reveal to her some important secrets. She turned pale and wept, and told me that she had long had an imperfect idea that she was only my adopted daughter, that
she

she had made this *melancholy discovery* without asking any questions, or being positively informed of it, that she had always banished from her imagination this disagreeable thought; but that, on reflecting on it sometimes, in spite of herself, she had imagined that she was a foundling like *Mina*; so, notwithstanding all my precautions, she has pretty nearly discovered her birth. I have no more to tell her than a few particulars, and to let her know the attentions and the affection of her anonymous mother. I am certain that this account will inspire Léocadie with a fond sentiment for her! I shall no longer be the *only mother*, the preferred friend, the dearest object.

Adieu, my friend, I wished to avail myself of the opportunity of Sauval, who is returning to Gilly. I will write to you again by Simon. Adieu, I shall scarcely sleep to-night! I have read in a thousand periodical publications, that the great
charm

charm of love consists in the lively emotions which it procures. Ah! when the heart has not been corrupted and dried up by criminal passions, what emotions can surpass those produced by filial piety, maternal affection, or even friendship alone!

LETTER LX.

From the same to the same.

February 22, in the evening.

THIS morning my angelic Léocadie made her first communion with a piety as affecting as sincere. She was accompanied by Mina, by six little girls belonging to the school, and by four other new female communicants. On coming out of the church, this interesting little party went and breakfasted

fasted at the house of our worthy rector. Afterwards, Léocadie invited all these young girls to dinner, at which Mademoiselle du Rocher presided; it was served up at half past twelve o'clock in Léocadie's chamber. Zéphyrine, who dined with us, and at a late hour, read to them on a pious subject during all the repast. At two o'clock Léocadie and her companions returned to the church; Léocadie did not come back till four o'clock; I was waiting for her in my own room. I made her sit down beside me, and I related to her in what manner providence placed her in my hands. I told her every thing, even the calumnies which this event had occasioned to be spread against me. While I was speaking, she held both my hands, which she bathed with her tears. I saw all the sentiments that she felt, successively painted on her charming countenance. Never was face more expressive than hers. You know that she turns pale as frequently as others

others colour; and this particularity, when she is strongly affected, gives to her features, in other respects so engaging, something singularly impressivè. All at once falling at my feet: "O! my real mother!" exclaimed she, "O! my generous benefactress, I console myself for not owing to you my life, when I reflect that I owe you a thousand times more! But how can I ever console myself for the troubles that I have caused you! But for this unfortunate, forsaken child whom you have taken to your bosom, malice could never have found means to traduce you!" Her sobs interrupted her speech; she was almost suffocated; I took her into my arms, I put her into an elbow-chair; I was obliged to unlace her, and make her drink a glass of water. "My dear child," said I to her, "it is, no doubt, a cruel misfortune to occasion, even innocently, a great scandal. I think, with a lively sorrow, that

" the

“ the crime which is imputed to me being
“ almost generally considered as proved,
“ gives me a frightful celebrity, renders
“ me an object of indignation to persons
“ of virtuous minds, who are not per-
“ sonally acquainted with me, and that it
“ is, at the same time, a dangerous ex-
“ ample and an additional precedent for
“ weak and unprincipled women, who are
“ tempted to go astray !” These
reflections are tormenting, and, in this
point of view, calumny must always be
afflicting and dreadful ; with what care
ought we not to avoid furnishing pretexts
for it ! What prudence and circum-
spection a virtuous and truly religious wo-
man ought to exert ! But, in short,
perfect innocence makes amends for every
thing ; it inspires the hope of a complete
justification, and it gives the courage to
wait with patience. “ Alas !” said
Léocadie, “ I am the fruit of a crime ;
“ I ought for ever to blush at my birth !”

Till

..... Till now I had spoken to her but very vaguely of her mother; I had entered into no detail in this respect; it was at last necessary to come to this interesting and delicate article! I told her that, being ignorant of the history of her mother, we ought to believe her as little culpable as it is possible to suppose; that certainly my dear Léocadie did not owe her life to an act of adultery, and that every thing bespoke in her mother the most endearing sentiments. Here Léocadie asked me whether I knew to a certainty that her mother was still in existence: "Most assuredly," answered I, "every year in the month of January, she sends you some charming presents; I have given you some of them; but I have carefully locked up the greater part, which I will now deliver to you. Come, my child, come and receive this trust which must be so valuable to you." On saying these words I rose up; Léocadie, pale and trembling,

trembling, followed me. I opened a large closet, and the first object that struck our eyes, was the basket in which Léocadie was found. "Here," said I to her, "is your first cradle, look at this veil "with which it was covered; it was embroidered by your mother." "Ah!" cried Léocadie, melting into tears, "I see none but her who took me in!" . . . In pronouncing these words, she threw herself into my arms; my tears flowed with hers! Till this moment, the idea of her mother had excited in her only confusion and grief. At length, taking up the note written by her mother's hand, I gave it to her, at the same time explaining to her that it was found in the basket! Then a new expression appeared on her face; she took, with the most lively emotion, this affecting note. Scarcely had she read the first line, when she fell on her knees, and in this attitude she finished reading it, shedding a torrent of tears. . . .

Must

Must I tell the truth, my dear friend? . . .
But can we do otherwise with those we
love? This religious respect, and this
excessive sensibility, occasioned me a cer-
tain degree of pain! I said to myself
that a weak and culpable woman, and a
mother who had abandoned her child, did
not deserve to inspire such sentiments. . . .
I said to myself above all: *And she never
felt any thing like this for me!* A quick re-
flection soon made me blush at this first
movement of envy; but equity which
makes me repel it, cannot destroy its prin-
ciple!

In the mean time, Léocadie, after having
read the note, applied it to her lips, and
afterwards said: "*Thou shalt quit me no
more, and I will carry thee with me to the
grave!*" She then put it into her bosom!
. Will you believe that I was deeply
hurt at these simple words: "*Thou shalt
quit me no more!*" From a first impulse,
I found in them an indirect reproach for

not having delivered her this paper sooner. But, nevertheless, I was sufficiently reasonable to be silent; and Léocadie, since she has read the note, is so taken up with the idea of her mother, that it is out of her power to pay attention to any thing else!

I shewed her all the presents, which she examined with the most lively emotion, and almost always in silence. Afterwards I ordered all these things to be carried into her room; we remained alone for half an hour longer; she was constantly weeping and kissing my hands; but she spoke no more! My heart was oppressed. It seemed to me that she was afraid to entrust to me all that she felt; I supposed that she wished to leave me, in order to go and contemplate again the gifts of her mother, and re-peruse her note. For the first time in her life, I found myself embarrassed in her company! Oh! how painful is this sentiment

timent when we love passionately !
At last I got up ; I embraced her, telling her that I was going into the drawing-room, and that she might remain in her own apartment till supper-time.

I learnt from Jacinthe that she had passed all this time in examining and laying out her mother's presents, in reading over and over a *note*, and in praying to God. She has wept a great deal ; this is evident from the redness of her eyes.

No ; my dear friend, I feel that I shall never be happy. A fatal presentiment announces to me that this dear child will occasion me some heart-rending troubles. I can no longer love but in trembling. It is midnight, I must conclude.

Adieu, my friend.

LETTER LXI.

From the same to the same.

February 28.

My dear friend! Figure to yourself, if possible, an idea of my trouble, and agitation. Three hours ago, Jacinthe entering my room, delivered me a large letter that came by the post. I saw an unknown handwriting, and a seal with these words: "*To live in order to expiate!*" I supposed that it was some libel; I undid the cover, and found in it two papers; I opened the first that presented itself, and I read what follows:

" O! you virtuous benefactress of my
" child! respectable and dear Pauline,
" allow an unfortunate mother once more
" to

"to address you! Deign to deliver
"this note to my daughter; thirteen
"years of regret, repentance, and grief,
"have, perhaps, given me a privilege to
"write to her."

Oh! what impression have these words
made on me: "*To my daughter!*" Alas!
I well knew that this too dear child does
not belong to me; but with what painful
emotion did I read this title written by
the hand of her mother! "*To my*
"*Léocadie!*" It seemed to me that
she was depriving me of it. . . . You
have, no doubt, a great curiosity to see the
letter that is addressed to her: here is a
copy of it.

"My daughter! I dare not, but
"in trembling and in secret, trace a name
"so sweet and so dear! Alas! this
"title given by your guilty mother, will
"cause you only astonishment and con-
"fusion! Overwhelming reflection!
"And I am Léocadie's mother; and yet

" I must blush at it ! Honour obliges me
 " to conceal the purest of all sentiments,
 " maternal affection ! What should
 " constitute my pride and happiness is for
 " me nothing but a subject of shame and
 " grief. . . . Thus it is that in deviating
 " from virtue, we overturn, we upset
 " all the natural order of connexions the
 " most intimate and the most sacred * !

* Nothing can be more true than this observation
 respecting marriage. Whatever may be the abuse of
 it in this country, it is the wisest institution ever in-
 troduced into civilized life. Its numerous advan-
 tages are described by MILTON, in language that
 speaks home to every heart not destitute of feeling.—
Translator's Note.

" Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source
 " Of human offspring, sole propriety
 " In Paradise of all things common else.
 " By thee adult'rous was driv'n from men,
 " Among the bestial herds to range ; by thee,
 " Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
 " Relations dear, and all the charities
 " Of father, son, and brother, first were known."

Paradise Lost. Book iv. l. 750.

" Your

“ Your unfortunate mother will never
“ have it in her power to acknowledge
“ you ; her fault was irreparable, and her
“ misfortune is without remedy and with-
“ out hope ! Yet you are not the
“ fruit of an adulterous love a fatal
“ error and a moment of distraction proved
“ my ruin a single instant of forget-
“ fulness can stain a whole life ! I
“ have no right to offer you lessons but
“ by painting to you my misconduct and
“ repentance ; fortune had done every
“ thing for me, and, from the age of *six-*
“ *teen*, I have enjoyed none of her gifts.
“ Alas ! in recovering virtue, in attaching
“ myself to it again with enthusiasm, I
“ have felt but too strongly the loss of
“ innocence ! And what tears has the
“ sacrifice of my child cost me ! Ah !
“ the source of them can never be dried
“ up ! I am separated from her ; I can
“ neither see her nor make myself known
“ to her And yet since she has
“ existed

“existed she is the sole object of my
“thoughts. O! my daughter! ever de-
“prived of thee, and ever taken up with
“thee, this heart profoundly feeling, this
“maternal heart is purified; for these thir-
“teen years, it has never been moved, it
“has never beat but for thee, it has been
“filled only with thy sweet image! . . . Oh!
“at least let thy soul answer mine! This
“idea will give me new life. I loved alone,
“and I fondly loved thee; now I can
“say to myself: she knows that I exist,
“she knows that at this moment I am
“thinking of her!

“Adieu, my daughter, adieu, dear
“Léocadie. Always follow the virtuous
“examples of your adoptive mother.
“Pity her whom Nature gave you, and
“consider that you are her only consola-
“tion, and that she has centered in you
“alone all her happiness and all her
“hopes.”

No

No language can describe the impression which this letter produced on Léocadie. Most assuredly, it is very natural that she should be deeply affected by it; but the excess of her sensibility in this respect, is beyond every thing that you can imagine. And I too, I have been *taken up* with her! not merely by *thinking* of her. For thirteen years past, what constant, what assiduous attention! And I too, I have suffered! Well, my dear friend, all that I have done, all that I have experienced, neither strikes her nor affects her, certainly not so much as that *single page* written by this unknown mother, of whose existence she was ignorant a few days ago. I am very far from accusing her of ingratitude; I am satisfied with her sentiments, I ought to be so! I do not by any means take ill of her the enthusiasm she shews for her mother, and it does not even astonish me. Such is the human heart; a long series of favours

makes much less impresson than an action so affecting, which, without being meritorious, presents something extraordinary and striking. We become cloyed with what occurs every day; it should seem that constant continuity lessens the value of favours; therefore what should exalt gratitude, weakens it! The heart, in general, feels with energy only by starts. This anonymous mother has seized on Léocadie's imagination; she will have over her a supreme ascendancy. However, I experience for this interesting woman an undescribable sentiment; I should wish to know her; I feel that I should love her, and yet I cannot think of her without a dreadful oppression of the heart.

Léocadie, on seeing the two letters from her mother, at first thought only of me; her first movement was to exclaim: that at last I was going to be completely justified! but I do not deceive myself in this respect;

respect; neither you nor my mother stand in need of this fresh proof; and it would produce no more effect on Albert's mind than the anonymous new year's gifts; he would consider these letters as an invention of Léocadie's *father*. I have, on this subject, so little hope and so much discouragement, that if these letters were known only to myself, I would not mention them to him. No; nothing can dissuade him from the opinion that he has formed; and, perhaps now, to be less unhappy, he wants to believe me guilty! He is at Nevres; he returns on Friday; I will shew him these papers, and I will give you an account of our conversation on this subject.

My mother writes me word, that little Stephen has been very ill, and that the physicians have recommended his taking the country air this spring. I have proposed to my mother to send him to me in the month of April; this child is ami-

able; I shall be delighted to have him here for some time.

Adieu, my friend; you know my affection for you; Ah! believe me, it is more than ever necessary for me to know too how much you love me!

LETTER LXII.

From the same to the same.

March 12.

ALBERT returned five days later than he had announced, because he made a little excursion to Dijon; and, in consequence of my letter to my mother, he undertook to bring Stephen with him. I shall keep this boy till the end of the autumn, and I intend in future to ask for him, in this manner, every year during the whole summer.

summer. This child is so well brought up, and so forward for his age that he will give me no trouble ; besides, Albert engages to teach him almost all his lessons. He eagerly seized this opportunity of doing a thing agreeable to my mother.

I shewed *the two letters*, certain beforehand of the little effect they would produce. I could not speak of this new event but with an air of constraint and embarrassment. Albert's two large penetrating eyes fixed on me, expressed a something ironical that chilled me ; the emotion of anger suddenly succeeded to that of fear ; I stopped short in the middle of my explanation. I am sure that I turned pale. I put the letters on a table, got up, and left the room. Scarcely had I reached my own apartment when I felt how fatal this external confusion was to me, and how much it spoke against me ; but I cannot get the better of it. The fear alone of appearing agitated, will always

ways produce it! These reflections occasioned me a real fit of despair; had I been able to weep, I should have been relieved; but my heart was oppressed; I was choking, and, ready to faint, I fell into a chair. At this moment Albert, holding up the two letters, appeared. On seeing him, my first movement was to make him a sign, with my hand, to go away. He stopped in silence, and looked frightened; afterwards, without saying a word, he quitted the room. Then I had the injustice to take it ill of him for having left me in the situation I was in, and I burst into tears. At the expiration of a few minutes, Jacinthe, sent by Albert, came in; I wished to be alone, and I remained three hours in my room! I have not seen Albert again but in the presence of witnesses; he said nothing particular to me. His conversation is natural and affectionate as usual; but I find in his look and deportment, something cold

cold and severe. Thanks to my folly, he is thoroughly persuaded that these letters are no more than a stratagem; and, perhaps, he thinks that this shameful artifice is of my own invention. Ah! how unhappy am I! In the evening, Albert returned the letters to me, saying, in a whisper: "Dear Pauline, let this remain between ourselves; I advise you not to shew these letters; for be assured that they would convince no one." I made no answer. We were in the drawing-room; all the children were round us. Of what use would be an explanation? How could I prove that this apparent confusion arises only from the idea that I suppose him to possess? Would not a woman, who was criminal, hold this language? Would Albert believe that so strange a delicacy is never to be overcome? A dilatory apology, destitute of proof, cannot efface a first impression that is lively and striking. This passed yesterday;

day ; I could not write to you, I was too ill ; I have still a very violent head-ach.

Adieu, pity the unfortunate Pauline.

LETTER LXIII.

*From the BARONESS DE VORDAC to the
MARQUIS D'ERNEVILLE.*

March 13.

I HAVE just received from Pauline a letter that wrings my heart, I send you this letter ; you will there find truth so ingenuously expressed, that you cannot call it in question. Ah ! calm the inquietude of this angel, of this incomparable woman, who has never lived but for you and for virtue. I ask you as a favour to conceal from her this step, which she would take ill of me.

LETTER LXIV.

The MARQUIS's Answer.

March 14.

PAULINE, Madam, gives way to inquietude that has no sort of foundation. My esteem for her is as unalterable as my affection; and this I will venture to say, is what my conduct ought to prove to her.

Accept, Madam, with your accustomed kindness, the assurance of my respectful attachment.

LETTER LXV.

*From the CHEVALIER DE CELTAS to the
COUNTESS DE BEL ***, CANONESS of
ALIX.*

August 6.

I HAVE been for this week, my dear cousin, at the Marchioness de T***'s, and I find myself again without emotion in the neighbourhood of Erneville castle, and the house of old Dupui. I recall to mind these errors of my youth only to be astonished at them. The confessions, which I have made to you in this respect, ought to convince you that the recollection, which I have left of them, cannot be dangerous. I pity one of the sisters-in-law, and I have a sovereign contempt for the other. This last sentiment is universal; at this moment

moment in particular, indignation, as well as scandal, is at its height. The *married pair* have made an agreement that has pacified every thing; the husband forgives the birth of *Léocadie*, and the wife has the same indulgence in regard to little *Stephen*. The two bastards, to the face of the whole province, are at length united and brought up together in Erneville castle. In consequence of this virtuous treaty, Albert tolerates the present lover, the Viscount de St. Méran, and all the resentment occasioned by the duel, is sacrificed to paternal love. Is not this heroic? Since the introduction of the little male bastard, the Viscount has been received at Erneville, and with open arms, both by his mistress and his rival; but it is said that, in return, Pauline has invited Stephen's mother, the Countess d'Olbreuse, to pay another visit to our neighbourhood, and that we shall see her arrive very shortly.

These,

These, it must be admitted, are events by no means common; this is no longer children's play. Pauline, the heroine of this fine romance, is two and thirty, and *the hero* is seven or eight years older!

All these follies divert us extremely. The Marchioness de T*** is worth hearing on this chapter; she has no small share of wit, and her company is delightful.

Certainly, my charming friend, in whatever manner it may be, we will meet again this year. I console myself for your absence only by indulging the hope of seeing you arrive at Autun, or by forming the project of going to join you at Lyons. In the mean time, write to me as often as you can; direct your answer to me here. I intend to stay here, at least, three weeks longer.

LETTER LXVI.

From the MARQUIS to the COUNTESS
D'ERNEVILLE.

Erneville, September 5.

I HAVE committed a blunder, or to speak more correctly, an act of folly, which occasions me much uneasiness.

You know what melancholy charm attracts and detains me in the cave for these last three years! The desire of fixing some fugitive thoughts, which overwhelm but still attach me, led me to pen there my long reveries. I carry thither a pocket-book, in which I write down whatever presents itself to my imagination; on my return home I again read over these productions of sorrow; when I am out

of the cave, I form an opinion of them with more coolness ; I copy what appears to me to be good, retrenching or disguising every thing that has a reference to my situation, and, of this I am forming a work *on melancholy*, in which will certainly be found feeling and truth. I never fail to burn the sheets of the original writing composed in the cave, when I have made an extract from it ; but sometimes I keep it three or four days. Yesterday, having it still in my pocket, at ten o'clock in the morning, I made an excursion on the high road, in order to try a new horse. In passing by the wind-mill, the horse, which is extremely skittish and restive, made a prodigious start, and threw himself down. I came off unhurt, which is very fortunate, for I was thrown under the horse ; but, in this movement, I lost my pocket book, which fell out of my pocket without my perceiving it. I did not make this discovery till I was undressing

ing

ing myself to go to bed. I sent one of my servants on the road ; but he could not find any thing, and I myself have searched in vain this morning. This pocket-book must have been picked up by some passenger, and will not be restored, since it has not been brought back already. True it is that my name is not in it ; yet, so near Erneville castle, the finder might well suppose that it belonged to me. I should be disconsolate, if it fell into the hands of Pauline ; but fortunately she never walks that way, nor the children neither. The post goes out this evening, and I wished to relieve my uneasiness by communicating it to you. Ah ! my friend, peace and tranquillity are blessings irrecoverably lost to your unhappy son !

I took Stephen into the cave ; I cannot express to you what I felt on seeing him seated on the rock where his unfortunate mother appeared to me ! No, indeed ; no reasoning, no strength of mind, nothing, in short,

short, will ever be able to dissuade me from the idea that I *heard her* and *saw her*.

.... It was she ! it is well proved that she then no longer existed ; but it was she ! And St. Méran absolutely saw nothing ! This recollection confounds my reason ; I daily repeat to myself that this vision was no more than an illusion ; I repeat it to myself in vain, I cannot believe it ; yet I cannot admit a prodigy I do not comprehend how this confusion of ideas has not entirely turned my brain.

Adieu, my dear mother ; Stephen is well, learns surprisingly, and becomes every day dearer to me.

LETTER LXVII.

Anonymous, addressed to the MARCHIONESS.

MADAM, Erneville, October 15.

A PASSENGER found, near Erneville castle, an old leather pocket-book, containing the papers sent herewith, which he read, because they were neither signed nor sealed. He shewed them to a lady who knows the hand-writing of the Marquis d'Erneville, and affirms that this singular composition is his. As it appears that the Marquis's brain is quite disordered, it is conceived, Madam, that it will be rendering you a service to inform you of the matter.

This Camille, Stephen's mother, who is here alluded to, was seduced by the

faithful Albert, and was, for a year, his mistress in Paris. Afterwards, she went under another name, and settled at *Nevers*, where she remained a long while; she came from time to time in disguise, to see her lover at *Erneville*; the *cave* was more than once the place of rendezvous. She travelled with him into *Auvergne*, and to many other places. In short, less constant than beautiful and captivating, she grew tired of this kind of life; and returning to Paris, came out at the opera-house, and made a great deal of noise by her talents and her beauty. The Duke de Rosmond fell in love with her, took her from the stage, and became fondly attached to her. This charming creature died about three years ago.

REVERIES

OF THE

MARQUIS D'ERNEVILLE,

WRITTEN BY HIM IN THE CAVE BY MOON-LIGHT, ON THE
4TH OF SEPTEMBER:

Found in the pocket-book, and sent in the anonymous letter.

YES! we can enjoy affections even shut up in the grave! death cannot destroy them; it serves only to refine them. We enjoy them with a profound melancholy; but it would be still more painful to renounce them! There is something more terrible than death; it is forgetfulness! Ungrateful, frightful forgetfulness, there is the tomb of sensibility.

O! Camille ! During your life, I banished from my thoughts the dangerous recollection of thee ; now I can, I must recall it to my mind ! To abandon myself to it, is now no more than a punishment and an expiation. Grief and remorse preserve to me the idea of my guilt; and gratitude throws an eternal veil over thy errors. I wish to retrace to myself only thy charms, the frankness, the noble pride of thy soul, and that affecting and impassioned energy which belongs to thee alone !

Thou art no more ! but thou livest still in this heart, which, not having been able to give itself to thee, and not daring even to regret thee, will never be consoled ! ... I having nothing to offer to thy memory but my grief. Ah ! at least the tears which I shed over thy ashes will flow till my last breath ! Here I saw thee again ! it was not a dream ; I saw thee again ! Not such as thou formerly appearedst

pearedst to me in those fleeting days of enchantment and infatuation! The lively bloom of youth no longer shone on thy face; the fire of love no longer animated thy eyes! Less dazzling, but equally beautiful, and a thousand times more affecting, I saw thee again on this rock! In this place consecrated to me by an inconceivable illusion! Yes; I am determined to remove all the doubts of a proud and vain reason! I am determined to believe that thy wandering shade has reposed in this mysterious asylum! Oh! how majestic was thy bewitching figure! thy steadfast and piercing look, sharp as an avenging sword, penetrated to the very bottom of my heart! Ah! this cutting shaft cannot be torn from it! What didst thou want? Didst thou come in order to punish me, or to announce to me my pardon? Shall I believe that the soul, released from its

terrestrial bonds, can preserve the desire of revenge? No; hatred and resentment are human passions; feeling alone must be immortal; it alone must survive us! Thy apparition must be a favour! Yet what dreadful trouble it has left me! What a revolution it has produced in my heart! Oh! from the bosom of the grave what an empire hast thou found means to resume over my imagination! . . . Incessantly beset by thy image, ever absent and prepossessed, I see nought but thee; I see, alas! only a fugitive shadow; reality is for me annihilated; I cannot enjoy it: my life is no longer any thing but a melancholy dream; I abandon myself entirely to mournful illusions; I take a delight in nourishing and preserving them! Why cannot this imagination, so struck, so filled by thee, present thee again to my eyes? Useless wishes! formed so often for these three years! Camille!

. . . . re-

.... return ... thou hearest me, thou listenest to me; but cease to be invisible; shew thyself! Oh! could I behold thee once more on the summit of that rock! by the mild and pure light of that starry sky! there, on that mossy seat, beside the cypress which my hands have planted! I would venture to interrogate thee; I should have but one question to put to thee; I should ask: "*Is Camille happy?*" and if she answered me, "*Yes, I am,*" I should die contented!

LETTER LXVIII.

From the BARONESS DE VORDAC *to*
MONSIEUR DU RESNEL.

October 17.

JUDGE, Sir, how unhappy I am to know that Pauline is ill, and to be detained here by a sacred duty. Have pity on me. Let me know exactly how she is, what her complaint is ; for all that I am told of it gives me no information. Sauval asserts that it is a nervous attack. Mademoiselle du Rocher writes me word that it is an indigestion. Léocadie's short note is very alarming, and explains nothing. In the name of heaven, write to me the particulars ! Has an express been sent to
Dijon

Dijon to the Marquis? In short, do not suffer me to be ignorant of any thing that concerns her. My uneasiness is inexpressible. I expect your answer with an impatience of which you alone can have an idea. Thank heaven! the Baron is not so ill this evening.

LETTER LXIX.

MONSIEUR DU RESNEL'S *Answer*.

October 17.

IN consequence of Sauval's account, I set out immediately for Erneville, and, though I have been here ever since five o'clock, I have not yet been able to see her. Léo-cadie and Maurice, without consulting their mother, had already sent for Doctor

Tiphaine ; and that respectable and able man told me in private, that this sudden illness certainly proceeded *from a moral cause*. She has had terrible convulsions ; she is feverish, she is fullen, does not open her lips, and can bear no one in her room, not even Léocadie. The doctor's visit appeared to displease her very much ; she has spoken to her children only to forbid them explicitly to send an express to the Marquis, or even to inform him of this accident by the post. They were inclined to disobey her in this respect, which I have prevented. I also made the physician sensible that he ought to conceal his opinion respecting her complaint, and this is his intention. However, the physician is by no means uneasy. But I own to you, Madam, that it is impossible for me to return this evening to Gilly. I shall sleep at Erneville castle, for the first time in my life in Albert's absence. I am determined

terminated to know how she will pass the night, and how she will be to-morrow.

This is the manner in which the illness came on :

Yesterday, which was a post-day, Pauline was extremely well. At four o'clock there were brought from the post-office a large letter for Pauline, and the newspapers. Pauline, after having looked at this letter, got up without opening it, and went alone into her own room. Every one was walking. At the expiration of an hour, Pauline rang the bell..... Jacinthe, not being in the house, Suzette went to her, and found her in a dreadful condition; she had a shivering fit and convulsions; she called for some ether, and would not lie down. But, the shivering increasing, she was put to bed. She then had some violent reachings. The children came in at this moment; they sent to Bourbon for the doctor, whom she positively refused to see. No one went

to bed ; and, at four o'clock in the morning she found herself so ill that she asked for the physician. He gave her a potion which quieted her a little. She is much better to-day, but still in bed, and, as I have already told you, does not choose to see any person whatever. She even begged the doctor to return to Bourbon. You know how much he is attached to her. He will not leave this place till she is able to get up.

In all this, the children are what they ought to be to the most affectionate of mothers, and the most perfect of governesses. Léocadie, in particular, is adorable. How ought every one who loves Pauline to cherish her! . . . I send this by Simon, who will bring me back an account of your health and the Baron's. I shall have the honour of writing to you again early to-morrow morning ; Sauval will carry you my letter ; he will be able to
answer

answer all your questions, and he will come back when you wish to send him.

Adieu, Madam; who, better than I, can form an idea of your concern and uneasiness?

LETTER LXX.

From the same to the same.

Erneville, October 18.

I HAVE seen her; she is up; a bath which she took at five o'clock in the morning, has wrought miracles. She has no more fever; but she is very weak, very much altered; and what is but too striking, is the extreme redness of her eyes!

Her heart has suffered a violent shock ; it is impossible to doubt it ; may she relieve her trouble by entrusting it to you ! As for me, without knowing this secret chagrin, and without divining it, I participate in it from the bottom of my soul.

I have to-day discovered that, notwithstanding Pauline's prohibition, Mademoiselle du Rocher has taken on herself to write to the Marquis ; so I am persuaded that he will return very shortly.

I shall set out from this place to-morrow after dinner ; you may well suppose, Madam, that it will not be to return to Gilly : I shall devote to you the remainder of this week. To be near you, is not to have quitted Pauline ; it is finding her again.

LETTER LXXI.

From the MARQUIS to the COUNTESS.

Erneville-castle, October 21.

PAULINE is still very much dejected ; her eyes are very red ; but, in other respects, she is perfectly recovered.

You positively enjoined me to inform you, with the strictest truth, of all the particulars of her illness. Alas ! mother, what shall I tell you ? On the 16th she was in the most perfect health ; the post arrived ; a letter and the newspapers were delivered to her ; she left the newspapers in the drawing-room, without opening them (I found them all sealed up on the chimney) ; she took the letter into her room ; and, after reading it, had horrible

rible convulsions. I opened the papers, arrived that day by the same post; and I there saw that the Duke de Rosmond, hunting with the king, had fallen from his horse, and was so dangerously hurt that there were no hopes of his life. Fortunately, (and this expression does not escape me, I employ it with reflection,) *fortunately*, I say, the newspaper of the 19th mentions that the Duke is out of danger. On *the 19th*, Pauline, for the first time since his accident, sat down to table, and went into the gardens! However, I must say that she read neither the former nor the latter paper; they both remained sealed up in the drawing-room; but Pauline received letters by the post! No one here read these newspapers, and I immediately burnt them, in order that there may not, at least in the house, be made from them some fatal comparisons. As a reward for my unlimited confidence, I dare earnestly entreat
you

you to conceal from her my reflections in this respect. To inform her of them would serve only to afflict her, and to torment me, by depriving me of my only consolation, that of opening to you my mind without any disguise. Pauline maintains that her illness arose only from a violent indigestion, followed by a nervous attack. I appear to believe it, she is satisfied, and we live on goods terms; if she knew what I think on this point, she could not but repeat that *all chances are always combined against her*. I am a little cloyed with this phrase; it would make no impression on me; and we should be both equally to be pitied. I admit that it is, physically, possible that Pauline may, without any moral cause, have had a fever and convulsions precisely at the hour of the arrival of the post. But, on that very day, at that very hour, she received a letter. This letter was neither from you nor me. She shut herself up to read it, and fainted after having

ing

ing read it! Here are a great many singular chances for one solitary fact!

You will tell me, my friend, that even supposing she had formerly loved the man whom she saw only for a few days, it would be improbable that she had preserved for him such a sentiment after fourteen years' absence. No; I do not believe that she has preserved any love; but I believe that, in adoring Léocadie, she has conceived a violent passion for her father; that, without being an accomplice in his artifices, she takes them kindly of him, that she thinks them ingenious and interesting, that she sees in them both an estimable wish to exculpate her, and an endearing affection for Léocadie. These attentions, these charming and sumptuous presents, this perseverance, these letters full of sentiment, all these things have ended by making on her a deep impression. Nothing appears to me more plain.

But

But let us drop the subject; I grant you that all these strange appearances are not positive proofs; yet you must at least confess that there is cause of astonishment, doubt, and affliction. You reproached me for abandoning myself to *fantastical* ideas which disturb and darken my imagination. Ah, my dear mother! alas! I am forced to love, with less violence, the object that alone could solely occupy and fill my heart. Every idea foreign to this object, however melancholy it may appear, if it can divert my mind from my real misfortune, cannot but be salutary to me. *The illusions of the cave* act only on my imagination, which they strongly possess; they inspire me only with melancholy: my reflections on Pauline rend my heart; and, were I to abandon myself to them without reserve, they would throw me into the most frightful despair!

Suffer

Suffer me then to bewilder myself with a shade, to meditate on a grave, and in vague, gloomy, but engaging ideas, to lose sometimes the recollection and the sense of my real troubles !

LETTER LXXII.

*From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS
DE VORDAC.*

October 8.

WHAT, my dear friend ! you question my confidence and my affection ? Ah ! do not completely overwhelm your unhappy Pauline ! Well, I will tell you all that it is allowable for me to avow. I shall afflict you without giving you any information.

information. I shall shew you the greatest proof of confidence, without revealing to you my secret. But, in my turn, I require from your friendship, that you cease to interrogate me on this melancholy subject, and that you burn this letter when you have read it.

Yes; this sudden illness was produced by a *moral cause*! by the discovery of a terrifying and painful mystery! I experienced, in the space of a few minutes, all that can strike the imagination and tear the heart! Surprise, alarm, terror, pity, indignation. and other movements still more painful and more violent! Ask me nothing farther. O! my friend, I make to myself a virtue of my silence; respect it; you could not cause it to be broken.

Do not be uneasy about my health; I take care of it; for it is useful to some beings. Ah! grief does not occasion death! This perishable body, notwithstanding

withstanding its fragility, is made for resisting, without being destroyed, the sufferings inseparable from life, as a vessel is made for supporting, without being dashed to pieces, the fury of the winds and storms.

Adieu; I shall certainly come and embrace you before the end of the week.

LETTER LXXIII.

The BARONESS's Answer.

October 25.

SOLE friend of my heart; my dearly beloved Pauline; yes, I shall respect your silence; I am certain that the motive of it is sublime. Were it even in my power I would not penetrate this fatal secret; I should think I was betraying it, by endeavouring

deavouring to divine it. I shall be silent without any effort ; I questioned you only to participate in your sorrows, if you were suffering : what are the particulars to me ? do I not know all, when I know what you experience ? Come and weep in the bosom of a faithful friend ; come, your tears mingled with mine will flow with less bitterness !

LETTER LXXIV.

From the MARCHIONESS to the BARONESS.

January 4.

THE anonymous new-year's gift is arrived. It consists of ear-rings, rings set with precious stones of very great beauty, and two other articles much more valuable in the eyes of Léocadie, as they are the work of her mother; a gown magnificently embroidered with gold and silk shaded, and a picture in oil colours painted in a charming style, and representing a woman, veiled, in a garden, tracing on a tree the name of *Léocadie*. These presents were accompanied by an extremely affectionate, but very short letter, addressed to Léocadie.

The

The Duke de Rosmond arrived at Moulins on the very day on which I left it. How fortunate for me not to have met him there ! He came on account of the meeting of the states of the province, that is to say, in order to spend a few days there with the Prince de * * *. I imagine that he will afterwards pay a visit to the Bishop of Autun. I cannot express to you to what a degree I suffer from knowing that he is so near us ! Léocadie is exceedingly troubled at this idea ; for I have not concealed from her, that many appearances persuade us that he is her father. She has found means to admit this supposition with the belief that her mother is not guilty of adultery. Her mother told her, in her first letter, that she was the victim of a fatal error. Léocadie thinks that she is free, and that the Duke may have seduced her only by concealing from her that he was married, which, undoubtedly, is very possible ; this infamous imposture

would be no more than a piece of gallantry in a man so depraved. The Duke being in the neighbourhood, we are often exposed to the inconvenience of unexpectedly hearing his name mentioned; then Léocadie turns pale and I blush. Alas! however it is not for me to blush! and it is I who groan under the weight of injustice and shame! But I complain not, since heaven has deigned to leave me innocence, that inestimable treasure, the irreparable loss of which is secretly deplored by so many hearts formed for virtue, a treasure so valuable, that even the omnipotence of the Creator cannot restore it to us, when it is lost! God can restore us health, happiness, virtue, and even life; but he cannot restore us innocence. His supreme goodness can only assist us in its preservation.

Madame d'Olbreuse writes to me constantly with the same exactness, and the same friendship. Her brother-in-law, the
Marquis

Marquis d'Elvas, has just married a relation of the Chevalier de Celtas, of the elder branch of the family settled in Languedoc. I do not believe that this alliance will produce a very affectionate intimacy between the Chevalier de Celtas and Madame d'Olbreuse.

Adieu, perfect and beloved friend! Most assuredly, I will go on Monday to Bourbon, to dine with the doctor, since I am certain of meeting you there, and I have, besides, the hope of bringing you home to Erneville.

LETTER LXXV.

From the same to the same.

March 2.

TRUE it is, my dear friend, that I have always laughed a little at monuments placed in gardens; and yet I have just had one finished within the enclosure of my parterre; but this idea is less inconsistent, and, above all, less common than you imagine.

I own to you then candidly, that not only will I not have this building removed, but that it was I who caused it to be placed where it now stands. This is what I did not choose to say publicly: the fact is as follows:

For

For upwards of two months past, I wished to be able to meditate on a tomb, and, knowing Sauval's discretion, I made him a half-confidant; I told him, that having declared myself against ornaments of this kind, I did not wish to appear inconsistent, especially in the eyes of my pupils; I informed him of my project, which is happily executed. I had a pretty statue of Melancholy; this charming figure is holding a dove in her hand, and weeping over a funeral urn. I have engraved on the socle of the statue these verses of Monsieur La Harpe:

" Ses maux et ses plaisirs ne sont connus que d'elle ;

" A sa douleur qu'elle aime, elle est toujours fidèle."*

And I said, before every one, that I was determined to place this statue in my

* Which may be thus rendered in English verse:

She only knows what ills and joys she proves,
For ever faithful to the grief she loves.

private garden, which appeared very natural. I added that, in order to give a good grace to the statue, the socle of which is too low, I should put it on a pedestal. Accordingly, by the side of the rock and the fountain, I have had made a small hollow work in masonry, resembling a pedestal. One day when Albert was at Luzi, I secretly deposited in the inner empty space of this work, a small cedar box which I entirely covered over with sheet-lead; afterwards, I myself put mortar sufficient to conceal it well, and I immediately ordered the whole to be closed up, in my presence, with bricks and cement. The day after this operation we set out for Dijon, and I said publicly to Sauval that I commissioned him to have this pedestal faced with white marble, and to place on it the statue. Instead of that, during my absence, he caused to be made according to our secret agreement, a monument of the most beautiful proportion and

and the most elegant form ; and the statue is placed on the summit of the rock ; there, it has a very striking effect. On my return, I appeared very much surprised and dissatisfied at this pretended invention of Sauval ; but the monument being constructed, and producing really a point of view extremely picturesque, all my pupils entreated me to leave it, and to this I had no great difficulty in consenting.

As for the cedar box, all that I can tell you, my friend, is that it contains a melancholy trust ! it contains the secret which hangs so heavy on my heart, and which I cannot confide to friendship. But if, as I hope, Albert should survive me, he will know this mystery when I shall be no more ; and I dare believe that then this monument so frequently bathed with my tears, will, at least, become the last object of his meditations !

Adieu, my dear and affectionate friend ; burn this letter immediately.

LETTER LXXVI.

From the VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN *to*
the COUNT DE POLIGNI.

Paris, April 20.

I SEE with inexpressible pleasure, my friend that, at length cured of an unfortunate passion, you give yourself up to the charms of study, reading, and philosophy. I will now answer the doubts which you propose to me, and the questions which you ask.

Believe me, my dear Poligni, the most numerous as well as the most hurtful prejudices are the work of the passions*. Simple credulity

* This assertion cannot be contested; yet our intelligent readers can never suppose that the autho-
ress

credulity can easily yield to evidence: no powerful attraction attaches it to error; it vanishes, without resistance, on seeing the light which the passions dread, and which they consequently avoid or pretend to call in question.

No; the people must have a religion. The less remote men are from a state of nature, the more they feel this want, this sublime wish inspired by hope and gratitude*. Atheism is a monstrous dream of civilized

ness means to condemn the passions altogether, but only the abuse or excess of them; for, as the poet justly observes:

“ Passions, though selfish, if their means be fair,
“ Lift under Reason, and deserve her care;
“ Those, that imparted, court a nobler aim,
“ Exalt their kind, and take some Virtue’s name.”

Translator’s Note.

* No person of reflection will say, that the people of those countries, called civilized, can dispense with religion; but, notwithstanding the position here laid down by Madame de Genlis, it is a well-known

civilized man, corrupted by pride; all the savages have established among them religious ceremonies; to acknowledge a sovereign power, to honour and invoke it, are ideas and actions inseparable, when we follow only the natural light of reason. Idolatry, therefore is no more than a wan-

fact that men, nearly in a state of nature, are not so much in want of it as those in the more advanced stages of society. It is not the savage, (as our authorefs asserts,) but the refined man, who stands most in need of a worship. The Indian, for instance, in the wilds of North America, or the more favoured native of any of the numerous archipelagoes in the South Sea, having scarcely any temptations to vice, (which is by no means the case among the inhabitants of countries, where the arts and sciences are introduced,) may be said to receive from Nature, almost all that is necessary to make him a useful member of the tribe to which he belongs. If the arts and sciences could be cultivated without corrupting the morals of nations, it would certainly be the *acme* of human improvement; but, of this, history affords no well-authenticated example.—
Translator's Note.

dering

dering of the instinct which the Creator has given us; and atheism, or what amounts to the same, *the deism* of our modern philosophers, is the most absurd and most astonishing depravation of it. Of all systems, the most extravagant is, no doubt, that of atheism; but the indifference and the conduct of the *deistical* encyclopedists are equally incomprehensible. Who has revealed to them that that supreme being who created man, endowed him with feeling and reason, and gave him an immortal soul, was indifferent to his homages and deaf to his prayers? That he expects nothing more from intelligent creatures who have received from him thought and the gift of speech, than from the animals destitute of reason which he has subjected to his empire? What! these simple reflections do not even inspire our deists with the slightest doubt.

God punishes not, and stands in need of no worship: they are sure of this! Of what use

then can be to me the belief of a God? What influence can it have on my intentions and my conduct? What benefit, what consolation can I derive from it? What then is that impassable being whom I cannot offend, on whom I cannot make an impression? that disdainful master who refuses to hear me? Why has he given me the faculty of knowing that he is the eternal source of all perfection, if it be not to adore him? The atheist is at least consistent; he says: *No worship, because there is no God.* But to say: *No worship, although there is a God,* is both to blaspheme, and to draw a conclusion in a manner infinitely absurd.

The irreligious man, as soon as he is positive, is mad, judging him only according to his own arguments; he will believe only what is geometrically proved to him. Now, he knows that it is impossible to prove to him that there is no God; he must be in doubt; and if he admit a God,

as

as it is equally impossible for him to prove that God does not wish to be honoured and invoked; he must also be in doubt in this respect, and, in this doubt, it is extravagant to reject prayer. Instead of this scepticism (the only kind of irreligion that we can conceive), our free-thinkers proclaim a fixed and unshaken belief; they are positive and decided, as if they had the most positive proofs of the truth of their suppositions. What then is this blind faith of incredulity? this faith so warm and so firm? and why does the christian faith occasion it so much astonishment?

We find repeated what was said formerly (and what might be true a hundred years ago), that there are no sincere atheists. Before modern philosophy had over-
set all principles, all ideas, and destroyed all morality, atheism was indeed extremely rare; there were then some true deists; but consequently very different from ours. These ancient deists, in admitting the existence

istence of God, thought that we ought to adore him, and offer up our prayers to him. On every other point they had only doubts, and this scepticism (which was that of Montaigne and of so many others) left them at least some respect and even veneration for the established worship, because they were of opinion that this worship might be agreeable to the Supreme Being; they neither admitted nor rejected revelation, and they admired the sublimity of evangelical morality. These deists had no pride; simple doubt occasions none: far from despising those who firmly believed, they repeated: "*Perhaps they are in the right.*" Accordingly among them, souls endowed with great sensibility, and minds capable of meditation, not being able to endure this fatal state of incertitude, reflected, and improved themselves, in order to discover truth, which always shews itself to those who seek it with sincerity; and they ended by becoming truly religious. The others,
hurried

hurried away by the passions, or mastered by sloth, indolently remained in a state of indecision. These deists were succeeded by atheists; pride, by which they were either depraved or intoxicated, united them, and they formed a sect, called *encyclopedists*. Certainly there can be no doubt of the atheism of the chiefs of this sect; during their life, they taught the doctrine, at the same time not daring to deny, at least openly, the existence of God and the spirituality of the soul; but, since their death, their letters and their posthumous works sufficiently demonstrate their real sentiments. Voltaire, Diderot, and d'Alembert, in preaching up materialism, in making atheists of all their proselytes, durst not take an odious title which would have shocked the multitude; they gave atheism a less dishonoured name; but, for sixty years, they spread its principles with indefatigable perseverance. Thus it is that atheism, notwithstanding its stupid audacity, forced

to become hypocritical, has assumed the mask of deism. And it might at this day, in general, be said with correctness, that *there are no sincere deists*. At length, by an overthrow of all reason, by an inconceivable consequence; which particularly portrays this age, the cause of atheism is no longer supportable; it is universally abandoned; and atheism never was so common. True it is that our pretended deists admit the existence of God *; but they trouble themselves no more than the atheists, about that God of whom they have made a being so perfectly useless to man and to morality! In short, they have broken the sacred tie which unites man to his Creator, and which affords at once an end, an encouragement, and a reward for virtue. I repeat it, there is not between them and the atheists any real difference, and this is the sort of prevailing and general irreligion.

* Robespierre also admitted it.—*Note of the Editor.*

Modern philosophers pretend that a people composed of atheists would form the most peaceable and mildest nation in the world, and they maintain that it were to be wished that there was no prevailing religion in a state and no prescribed worship. Every government that should not prescribe a public worship, would abolish religion. If this misfortune ever happen in France or elsewhere, what will be the result? that the people will fall into the most deplorable superstition. Whoever has lived in country places, and knows the people, knows that they will never dispense with worship. If they be deprived of the religion of their forefathers, they will make one for themselves; they will forget the gospel, the moral of which curbs the passions; they will make all piety consist in trifling ceremonies; these ceremonies, being multiplied and degenerating, will

will daily become more absurd, and will insensibly form idolaters and fanatics*.

In order to secure the empire of equitable and beneficent laws, this human code must be supported by a religious code. What are laws without public morality? And where would this morality be found in France, if religion were destroyed? Where would the people find the first notions of it? In the books of real philosophers? In those works which have raised France (ungrateful France!) above all other nations? But if we were determined to have no more religion, it would be

• May we not be permitted to ask, whether any ceremonies could possibly be more trifling, or more absurd, than some of those which were dictated by the priesthood in France? Among others, who has not heard of the almost incredible practices recurred to, under the immediate guidance of these ministers of grace, in the *devout* addresses paid, by credulous females, to *St. Guignolet*, a saint of no common fame in Burgundy?—*Translator.*

necessary

necessary to prohibit the reading of Fénelon, Pascal, Massillon, Bossuet, Racine, &c. because they prove in their works that real virtue cannot exist without religion, and they victoriously refute all the sophisms which, in our days, have appeared such *luminous* novelties! We should then be obliged to have recourse to the books of the modern philosophers.

Heaven preserve us from the dreadful misfortune of ever seeing their maxims and moral reduced to action! We should see every thing most monstrous that madness, inconsistency, licentiousness, injustice, and ferocity can offer? Who could find in these incoherent works any chain of principles whatever? The most striking contradictions swarm in every page; the most odious vices are there deified; it is a gloomy labyrinth strewn with abysses, where we are bewildered from the first outset!

Morality, without religion, will always be arbitrary; and no person then setting out
from

from sacred principles, every one will be able to maintain the most pernicious sophisms. The one will make a panegyric on the passions, the other on suicide; another will turn the virtues into ridicule, and will treat as prejudices the love of our country and the sentiments of nature. He will maintain *that a woman of gallantry is more useful to the state than she who passes her life in attending the sick, relieving the poor, and releasing prisoners* *. Another will praise ferocious actions, and will see no more than an amiable weakness in adultery, and even in the most shameful and most depraved excess of debauchery †. All these things are to be found in the writings of our philosophers. Why should not all these principles be admitted? They are convenient to so many people! And

* Helvetius.

† Diderot and Voltaire.—*Q.* Might not the authoress have here added the name of the celebrated and, we fear, too popular German dramatist, Kotzebue?—*Translator.*

to

to what tribunal can we appeal against them? Who will have authority to condemn them? Is not the opinion of one man as good as that of another man? And if he who maintains a bad one, has wit and great talents, will he not always be sure to be in the right? But with a religious code, this moral anarchy cannot exist, since every thing that is contrary to the moral taught by religion, is admitted as bad. Will it be said that there would be elementary works of morality written for the people? I defy any one to make them useful and consistent without copying the gospel; but, even in this case, if they be not given as the word of God, they will make none but hypocrites; for, from their own authority, men will never prevail on their fellow-creatures to submit to a moral so austere and so pure; they will feel that it is sublime; they will sometimes seem to follow it (which will be only to outward appearance); and they
- will

will substitute pride to conscience*. The fear of God may lead to perfection; the mere fear of the blame of mankind has never produced real virtues, and commonly inspires nothing but meanness and falsehood. In short, if we give any other moral than that of the gospel, it will be a false one; and if we give this eternal moral, what madness, when we can speak in the name of God, that is to say, with supreme authority, to speak only in our own name? To plunder the gospel and to proscribe it, would be a strange infatuation.

What can we oppose to these arguments? That religion may produce fanaticism? What do not men abuse? Must we endeavour to extinguish, in every heart, the

* Is not this, in general, too much the case with the professors of christianity? Where shall we find the man who, independently of the religion that he pretends to follow, does not, in a corner of his heart, treasure up a *convenient* creed of his own, which always permits him to gratify his MASTER-PASSION?—*Translator.*

love of our country and of liberty, because these sentiments misunderstood, have, in all times, led to the commission of crimes the most atrocious? Let us observe, that religious fanaticism may be combated by the gospel itself, which breathes nothing but mildness and toleration, and which, far from having a mean so powerful against the fanaticism inspired by the love of liberty, the most imposing examples seem to authorize all its excesses. All the heroes, the most revered in this way, were assassins: Harmodius and Aristogiton, together with Timoleon among the Greeks; Brutus among the Romans, &c.

■ Fortunately for the cause of virtue, since the death of the chiefs of the most dangerous of all sects, irreligion is no longer cried up but by those whose works are as contemptible as their principles; impious profelytes, who, professing to revere the encyclopedists, have so frequently, by their ignominious praises, tarnished the name of
Voltaire,

Voltaire, and profaned that of Rousseau. Writers without talent, who, in a barbarous language as inflated as incorrect, repeating nothing but common place equally stale and dangerous, fancy that they have fathomed all the depths of metaphysics, and think that genius consists in denying and destroying every thing ; that they are eloquent if they are obscure and whimsical, and that they write like Voltaire, as soon as they have talked of *philosophy*, and adopted his orthography. Ridiculous pigmies mounted on ticklish stilts, in order to ape the Titans scaling heaven* ! Alas ! the real Titans, like those of fable, raising after death the earth which covered their bones, have partly opened abysses more profound than the burning gulfs of Ætna !

* According to fable, the Titans thunderstruck, and plunged into the subterraneous gulfs of Sicily, produced, by their efforts to release themselves, the crater of Ætna and its eruptions.

LETTER LXXVII.

The COUNT DE POLIGNI'S *Answer.*

May 6.

YES, my dear St. Méran, your observation is just and new ; the cause of atheism is abandoned ; yet never were there so many atheists. It is because the mind has been enlightened in spite of itself ; or, to speak more correctly, driven to extremities by victorious refutations, while the heart has remained corrupted. We renounce insupportable propositions ; we preserve the principles which favour the passions. Thus this apparent contradiction, which has struck you, is less an inconsistency than an artifice. We wish to conceal a depravation that would disgust,

if it were openly displayed; people turn deists in order not to avow a horrible materialism, or the most perfect and most extravagant indifference on this important subject. No one, among the modern philosophers, dares to say truly what he thinks; this is what particularly disgusted me with them; for I have discovered that there does not exist a single one of their proselytes who, unless he be an idiot, is not a hypocrite.

Hypocrites, who assume the mask of religion, may, at least in many respects, be useful to public morals by their examples, and even by their actions; they are, by their kind of hypocrisy, forced to live in an austere and frugal manner, to renounce ostentation and the ruinous inclinations which deprive generous hearts of the possibility of indulging themselves in beneficence. A *hypocrite* relieves the poor, and founds hospitals; the history of his outward life is that of a saint; all its
results

results are beneficent, for the mere imitation of virtue can be useful to human kind.

But nothing good can result from the hypocrisy of our deists, who adorn themselves only with an arbitrary, and consequently a false, virtue. Slaves as they are of the passions, intoxicated with pleasure, and speaking incessantly of Virtue, they disfigure her sacred image, and, not unfrequently, give her sacred name to Vice herself; they are, both by their conversation and example, the corrupters of public morals.

At the time when, carried away by the stream, I was *a man of gallantry*, I asked myself more than once, in the midst of my most brilliant successes, why I found this character so insipid. I have since discovered the reason.

It may be flattering to self-love to conquer the scruples of a woman of feeling; to see her preserve and revere principles,

principles, the sacrifice of which we obtain without destroying them; to possess a heart subdued and not corrupted; to catch, to wipe away the tears of repentance, and not to be able to dry up their source; to find in the weakness that makes us happy, an eternal subject of fear, triumph, tender emotion and gratitude. But this is a happiness that I have never enjoyed. I had none but *deistical* mistresses, that is to say, admirers of the works of our philosophers and of their principles; true it is I received from them, by the way, both the title and the privileges of a lover; but the victory did not belong to me; Voltaire, Diderot, and Helvetius, were their real seducers. These ridiculous female metaphysicians, equally insipid and despicable, yielded without making any sacrifice; they talked impudently of virtue, without regretting it, and even without having any knowledge of it; and I thought, with some reason, that I might, without scruple,

quit

quit a woman who yields without remorse. In short, I ended by finding, that all things considered, courtesans were infinitely preferable to *philosophical* mistresses; it was retrenching from a scandalous kind of life, falsehood and adultery, and two very unpleasant attendants, constraint and *ennui* *.

Adieu, my dear Viscount, I am going to undertake a fresh journey, but I shall pass through Paris, and if you are there still, I shall stop a few days solely to enjoy your company.

* We should be guilty of great injustice to the authoress, were we to withhold the tribute of applause, so truly her due, for the nice discrimination which she here makes between virtue, taken napping, and open profligacy. In this passage, the difference between the frail beauty, who errs through passion, and the abandoned wanton, who transgresses through principle, is most judiciously defined. It is to be hoped, that this excellent lesson of Madame de Genlis will not be lost on the youthful part of our fair readers: it shews them that the most virtuous female should never think herself too secure; and that, exposed as the sex incessantly are to the masked attacks of many a *Sedley*, she should ever bear in mind that "the woman, who deliberates, is lost."—*Translator*.

LETTER LXXVIII.

From the VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN *to*
MONSIEUR DU RESNEL.

La M***, August 20.

I HAVE already told you long ago, my friend, that I by no means disapprove of your intention of settling all your property on the young and charming Léo-cadie. I assure you that if I had your fortune, I should wish to have it in my power to apply it to the same purpose.

You wrote me word, six or seven years ago, that you meant to defer, as long as possible, making this intention public; because in the bloom of Pauline's youth, the purity of your motives might be questioned. Consider my friend, that Pauline, although she is thirty-two or
thirty

thirty-three, has lost nothing of her charms, and that Léocadie is but fourteen and a half. There is no immediate hurry; every thing, on the contrary, ought to induce you to delay this business. If Léocadie had such a fortune settled on her, a crowd of offers would present themselves; and, probably, she would be married in less than two years. Is it not more desirable that she should remain, till nineteen or twenty years old, under the authority of Pauline? Allow that education, so well begun, to be completed and improved. At least wait for two or three years longer: this is my opinion. I own to you that, from the interest I take in the matter, I should really be sorry to fail in persuading you in this respect. Let me know your determination.

You are right, my friend; although I have undoubtedly renounced all hope, it is still out of my power to tear myself from the spot inhabited by Madame de

Rosmond ; I shall remain here till the month of November ; but I shall certainly come into Burgundy this spring. So many sentiments call me thither.

Adieu, present my respects at Erneville-castle, and to the amiable and *perfect female friend*.

LETTER LXXIX.

From the MARCHIONESS to her Mother.

Erneville-castle, November 12.

WE are just returned from Autun, my dear mother, where, thanks to the virtuous bishop in whose palace we resided, I spent a very agreeable fortnight. Ah ! how pleasing it is to admire near at hand, an example of virtue so pure and so perfect ! especially when we have preserved our innocence,

nocence, and no bitter retrospect on our own conduct weakens the enjoyment of so ravishing a sight. I said to myself, in contemplating our bishop, what I have so often said to myself when in your company, that I am still very far from such perfection; but that I can attain it; and this idea makes me enjoy the very virtues which I do not possess. I am spotless in the eyes of God; there is the motive of a just hope; we can do nothing without his assistance; moral perfection is one of his blessings, and undoubtedly the most valuable; if he sometimes deign to grant it to repentance, could he refuse it to innocence that implores it with humility?

I have had drawn by Sauval a series of small pictures, painted in water-colours, representing all the virtuous actions done in our days, of which I have been a witness, or of which I have had positive proofs. You my mother, Albert, Ma-

dame de Vordac, Monsieur du Refnel, the Bishop of Autun, and our worthy rector, have hitherto furnished me with all the subjects, which will ever be to me the most interesting and the most useful. What a gratification to find examples which we revere, and sublime models in the objects of our attachment! I have placed this enchanting collection in my little drawing-room, and entitled it: "*The Consoling Recollections.*" Behind each picture, is written, in my own hand, the history of the anecdote represented by the painter. With what pleasure I shut myself up in this cabinet, where I am surrounded by such charming images! where admiration is, in my heart, delightfully blended with feeling! Ah! here I, without difficulty, forget malice and calumny! How could my disposition possibly be soured by injustice and misfortune, when I can fix my imagination on such sweet ideas!

At

At Autun I several times met with the Chevalier de Celtas ; I was very polite towards him : notwithstanding all his intrepidity, he appeared much embarrassed on seeing me so calm and so natural. He is, at this moment, extremely taken up with his young cousin, the Marquis de Celtas, the brother of the lady who has married the Marquis d'Elvas, brother-in-law to Madame d'Olbreuse. This young man has some fortune and a pretty person ; it is said that he does not want for understanding ; but his manners announce a confidence and a self-conceit that displease me exceedingly. Though he has never lived any where but in the country, he thinks he has all the best airs of the people of fashion about court, a piece of education that he has picked up in novels, and pretended moral tales, which exhibit only a picture, equally false and disgusting, of the great world ; because their authors wished to paint that with which they were

unacquainted, and because there resulted from this presumption, nothing but portraits of *petits-mâîtres* and coquettes, as little resembling as those of the valets and waiting-women on the stage. In short, this Marquis de Celtas is going to display, in Paris, the graces for which he is indebted to Crébillon * and Marmontel. I doubt whether they will procure him a welcome in good company. On his setting out for the capital, he asked me for a letter to Madame d'Olbreuse, which I gave him.

I have, my dear mother, executed your commissions in regard to *the perfect female friend*; I found her very much fallen away and altered; her husband has again been near dying of the gout in his stomach; the Baroness set up with him for eleven successive nights. What a life she leads!

* *Crébillon* the younger, author of some novels, very indifferent in point of talent and not a little licentious.—*Note of the Editor.*

always

always nursing a morose old man, very ill-tempered, and often very violent and unjust. Thus have the most brilliant years of her life glided away; I admit that she cannot regret them; for austere and painful duties, so perfectly fulfilled, and with so much perseverance must leave behind a very sweet remembrance! And that of the most lawful pleasures can occasion only vain regrets. In order to enjoy well the present, and hope for every thing from the future, we must be able to esteem and applaud ourselves on recollecting the past*. Who, better than Madame de Vordac, can know such an enjoyment?

The physicians assert that the poor Baron has not six months to live. Ah!

* This sentiment is concisely and beautifully expressed by MARTIAL:

“ ——— *hoc est*

“ *Vivere bis, vitâ posse priore frui.*”

To enjoy past life, is to live twice.—*Translator.*

how

how pleasing would it then be to me to see realized an idea which has so often presented itself to my imagination, since Monsieur du Resnel has been a widower ! What happiness to see two persons so worthy of each other, and who are so dear to me, for ever united by a sacred tie !

Adieu, my dear mother ; *my first* and best beloved *friend* ! Your child embraces you with all the affection of a grateful heart, incessantly taken up with you and the remembrance of your favours.

LETTER LXXX.

From the COUNTESS D'OLBREUSE *to the*
MARCHIONESS D'ERNEVILLE.

Paris, March 30.

THE fortunate St. Méran sets out to-morrow for Erneville, and I shall send this letter by him. I much envy his happiness, my charming friend; he will see you; he will hear you; he will pass six weeks in the most amiable society that I know.

However, so much happiness will not be unattended with danger to him. He will see Léocadie, who has attained her *fifteenth* year, and, no doubt, acquired new charms; for it seems to me that she could only grow tall and not improve in beauty.

What

What will become of the poor Viscount whom we saw so passionately fond five years ago? He knows, beforehand, that he has a formidable rival in Monsieur du Resnel; this will certainly produce those great events which please Mademoiselle du Rocher so much in novels, and appear to her so ingenious, although they are not absolutely new, such as quarrels between intimate friends, duels, elopements, &c.

I was right in telling you that I augured nothing good from a man called *Celtas*. Nevertheless, in spite of my antipathy to that name, I gave a very good reception to the brother of my sister-in-law; this to me was a duty. He arrived in Paris towards the end of November, and was brought to me the very next day. He was still in mourning for his grandfather, of whom he is the sole heir. I had a great deal of company at my house, and, after the first compliments, I spoke to him of his grandfather, and some one who

who was there, and who was acquainted with this old Celtas, took it into his head to ask of what disorder he had died. "Of a disorder," answered his grandson, "of which no one ever complains, and which exercises only the patience of children and heirs."—"What then is that disorder?"—"Old age." Figure to yourself, at this answer, the surprise and indignation of all the company! Madame de Sévigné for a silly answer saw, on rather slight grounds, *horns* on a young man, who had been brought up in the country; for me, I with more reason saw, on this youth, horns and *claws*, and every thing the most disgusting and the most hideous that can be imagined. But recollect Marmontel's tale of *La bonne mère*, and you will there find the origin of this pretty fally.

You will there see one *Versac* who turns the brain even of the most feeling and most virtuous women, with this kind of gaiety, and who, having just lost an uncle
and

and a benefactor, calls his deep mourning suit a *pattern dress*.

The Marquis de Celtas, knowing exactly by heart the tales of Marmontel and the novels of Crébillon, and wishing, at all events, to please the ladies, has taken for a model the men represented in these works as beings full of grace, and whose captivating manners are irresistible. In truth, these authors gravely assure us, that those are not estimable young men, but they assert that the women cannot resist them, and young Celtas *who is determined that women shall not resist him*, dispenses with esteem, in order to obtain preferences, successes, and brilliant victories; at least such are his ideas and his hopes. A few days after the supper which I have just mentioned to you, Monsieur de Celtas came to pay me another visit; I was alone; and I own that, at eight and thirty, I did not expect to receive a declaration of love from a young man of two and twenty, whom

whom I saw for the second time. This, however, happened to me. I answered in such a manner as to disconcert any one who had a shadow of common sense; but Monsieur de Celtas did not even listen to my answer. I felt no common surprise on seeing him get up with a triumphant air, spring towards the chimney, take a pair of scissars out of his pocket, and nimbly cut my two bell-ropes..... This is an ingenious trick which he has read of in one of Crébillon's novels. As this piece of gallantry announced a somewhat brisk attack, I prudently resolved on a retreat; I hastened towards the door, and ran into the antechamber, whence I sent him word by one of my servants, that I desired he would go out of my house, and never presume to set his foot in it again. What say you to this gallant adventure? However, he conducted himself, on this occasion, according to all the rules of the art, prescribed and observed by his models,
who

who succeed only by dint of *boldness* and *effrontery*, and who always begin their amorous career *by attacking* women of forty, in order to *establish their fame in the world*.

He has been presented to the princes, and there covered himself with ridicule by the impertinence of his noisy and familiar manner, and by the self-importance of his deportment and behaviour. In short, with the exception of his sister, every one has shut the door against him: banished from good company, he has thrown himself into bad, and is there ruining himself by play, and women of easy virtue. Here is a young man of a good family, of fortune, of a very agreeable person, and not deficient in understanding, lost without resource, because, on the credit of writers who are seductive, but without any knowledge of the world, he believed that, in order to please and succeed, it was necessary to be insolent and prove himself wicked.

wicked. This example is not the only one that I know of the kind ; I have seen many other similar in my time. I assure you that the mischief which these bad works do our young men brought up in the country, and those who are foreigners, is truly incalculable. The Viscount will tell you that he saw, in his travels, a young coxcomb whose sole occupation was to execute women's little performances, in order to imitate the Marquis in the play of *Le Cercle* *, who captivates all the ladies by embroidering, and making tapestry and garters. Undoubtedly, it is not a man of the world who said that the author of this piece was *a listener at people's doors*. Who ever, in company, saw young men do needle-work, and coquettes express themselves as Poinfinet makes them speak ? Whosoever could undeceive youth in regard to all these absurd follies, would

* A comedy by *Poinfinet*.

certainly

certainly render them a very great service. For this, talent would not be necessary; it would be sufficient that the author of such a work should be known to have passed the greatest part of his life at court and in the fashionable world.

Adieu, my amiable and dear Pauline, do not forget me quite; this will sometimes recall to your mind one who is an affectionate friend and your most sincere admirer.

LETTER LXXXI.

From the VISCOUNT DE ST. MÉRAN *to the*
COUNTESS DE ROSMOND.

Erneville-castle, April 7.

HERE am I, Madam, in the only place where I can take any pleasure in your absence, near an old and faithful friend, and near Pauline and Léocadie. I found the latter grown still handsomer, if possible. You are fond of portraits; I will sketch you hers: this is all that can be done when one speaks of her or of *Uranie*!

Léocadie is so beautiful that it might be thought all the most perfect descriptions which the poets have traced of beauty, were taken from her person, and that the
faces

faces of Venus and of Hebe, modelled by the Grecian sculptors, are only copies of hers. We forgive them for not having rendered the expression of her countenance, (how impart to marble so much feeling and animation?) but still in their master-pieces we discover Léocadie's features; in admiring all those enchanting heads which bear to each other resemblances so striking, those sublime works of various artists who lived in different ages; in contemplating the Venus of Medicis, and the children of Niobe, we recollect Léocadie, and we say to ourselves: "Beauty is not ideal; Léocadie is the true model of it, and, to be beautiful, a person must resemble her." However, when we see her for the first time, we are neither struck nor dazzled; her majestic and slender shape is not the elegant make of Diana nor of *Urania*: no lively carnation colours her cheeks, and forms a striking contrast with the pure
fairness

fairness of her complexion; every thing in her has harmony and sweetness; her bloom is that of a white rose animated by a faint tint of vermilion. At first sight, we find her person so agreeable, so full of gentility and grace, that we are not immediately inclined to say: "*How beautiful she is!*" but to exclaim: "*How pretty she is!*" It is only in examining her form that we are astonished at its regularity; the more we fix our eyes on her, the less is it possible to describe her person minutely. We wish always to contemplate it in the whole. We know not whether her shape be perfect, we know only that there is none better proportioned; we scarcely remark the make and colour of her gown; but we are charmed with the elegant simplicity of her attire; dressed like all other women, it seems still that she has a particular fashion; in it we find a certain striking grace, which appears original without being studied; her bewitching face produces a similar impression;

VOL. III. R fion;

sion; when we happen to see her for the first time, we recollect better the expression than the features, and we cannot say whether there exist finer eyes than hers; we have been struck only by her look. It is an angelic soul that gives to her beauty so many charms, so much interest and variety, and her mind too assimilates in such a manner with her soul, that we cannot pass on them a separate encomium; all that she says, pleases, affects, and persuades, because she says nothing that is not inspired by reason and sensibility; an exquisite delicacy gives her that quickness which seizes and feels every thing; and an incomparable candour diffuses over her smallest actions an engaging charm that finds its way to the very bottom of the heart.

This portrait, I own, is drawn by an impassioned admirer *. Be assured, however,

* Admiring as we do, the talents of Madame de Genlis, we are, like herself, somewhat apprehensive that

ever, that it is by no means embellished ;
 love even cannot flatter the original.
 Yet I cannot say that this object is *incom-*

that her picture of the all-accomplished Léocadie will be thought over-studied : in her endeavours to finish it highly, she has, in our humble opinion, rendered her colours rather too *glaring*. However, as we have taken the liberty of making this observation on a portrait drawn by our amiable artist, we will beg leave to present her with one from the *chaste* hand of a great master.—*Translator's Note.*

PORTRAIT OF MRS. BIDDY FLOYD.

- " When Cupid did his grandfire Jove intreat
- " To form some beauty by a new receipt,
- " Jove sent, and found, far in a country-scene,
- " Truth, innocence, good nature, look serene ;
- " From which ingredients first the dext'rous boy
- " Pick'd the demure, the aukward, and the coy :
- " The Graces from the court did next provide
- " Breeding, and wit, and air, and decent pride :
- " These Venus cleans'd from ev'ry spurious grain
- " Of nice, coquet, affected, pert, and vain.
- " Jove mix'd up all, and his best clay employ'd ;
- " Then call'd the happy composition FLOYD."

SWIFT's *Poetical Miscellanies.*

parable! It is, above all, by *comparing* her that I admire her with so much enthusiasm.

I am sure that a divine muse brought Léocadie into the world ; for she has every talent as she has every charm ; she already makes very agreeable verses ; but yet she will neither give them nor shew them. I have, nevertheless, picked up four, which, *without the author's name*, are engraved on the back of a medallion that she has just given to her friend Zéphyrine. You must know, Madam, that this medallion contains, on one side, Léocadie's portrait, and that it was put round Zéphyrine's neck at the moment of a separation ; Zéphyrine setting out for Dijon with her father and mother, and not expecting to return for three months. These are the verses :

“ This tender token of my love,

“ This portrait on thy breast display ;

“ But jealous were I, shouldst thou prove

“ Consol'd by *it*, when I'm away.”

I shall

I shall remain here *the time agreed on*.
 I flatter myself that you will quit
 La M * * * sooner than usual; I shall
 then have a whole winter; and this, to me,
 will be *summer*.

Adieu, Madam; rely for ever on the
 sentiments in which you deign to partici-
 pate, and even on all those which you have
 prescribed. Consider, at least sometimes,
 that if I can be silent, I cannot change.
 Did I not suppose you to have this idea,
 silence would be a torment without re-
 compense and without consolation.

Rivality has almost made me fall out
 with Du Resnel; he does not forgive me
 for having so often *forgot* his commission
 of the moss-roses which he wishes to pre-
 sent to Léocadie. He is very much
 astonished to find in me any neglect in
 regard to him and her. This proves

“Combien nos jugemens sont aveugles et vains *.”

* How blind and vain are our opinions.

VOLTAIRE'S *Tancrède*.

LETTER LXXXII.

From the MARCHIONESS *to the*
BARONESS.

May 29.

AH! pity your unhappy friend! My mother is dangerously ill! Our horses are going to be put to; we shall set off in my small coach; the large one is out of repair; I shall take no maid; the carriage being able to hold only Albert, myself, Maurice and the Doctor, whom we hope to persuade to come with us on our way through Bourbon. I leave here Léocadie; Albert wished that the fourth place should be for Maurice I have to support at
once

once a most cruel and heart-rending inquietude, and the chagrin of being separated for the first time from Léocadie ; and, to add to all this, the measles being both in your house and in your village, I cannot ask you to take this dear little girl under your care during my absence !

Adieu ; my tears prevent me from seeing what I write ! O ! my angel ! pray to God that he may preserve me the best and the most beloved of mothers !

LETTER LXXXIII.

From the same to the same.

Dijon, June 8.

THANK God, I breathe, she is out of danger. The physicians, within these eight and forty hours, say that they will answer for her recovery. But, great God! what have I suffered! I saw her dying! Oh! what a tie is that which attaches a daughter to her mother! There is certainly something physical in this sacred attachment. To lose a mother is to lose a portion of one's existence! We sat up with her for four successive nights; she retained all her senses, and knew
her

her danger perfectly ; she thought only of God, of Albert, and of me ; but with angelic sincerity and resignation. What sublime lessons I received from her too on this occasion ! Ah ! with a life so full of innocence and virtue, how little death is to be dreaded ! This sight so afflicting to us was the grandest and the most awful that can be contemplated.

She is extremely weak ; bleeding has saved, but exhausted her ; I shall remain here near a month longer, for I will not quit her till she is in a perfect state of convalescence. I shall be much tormented during all this period by my uneasiness respecting Léocadie and Sylvestre. How I love Monsieur du Resnel, who has written to me to ask leave to go and take up his abode at Erneville during all the time of my absence ! Knowing my children are under his care, I shall be much more easy.

I am often very unreasonable : if I hear of an accident, I fancy at the moment that the same misfortune may have happened at Erneville. One day it was related that a young woman, reading in the evening, had set fire to her head-dress, and burnt herself in a dreadful manner ; and, on this, I had the folly to dispatch a messenger to Mademoiselle du Rocher solely to renew to her cautions repeated a thousand times, and I could not be quiet till I had received her answer. Oh ! how much we ought to love a good mother ! What uneasiness, what heart-rendings have we not occasioned her ! In the early infancy of my children what did I not suffer ! They never fell down that, for forty days, I had not all the horrors of a concussion ; when they were not immediately under my eyes, I could not hear, out of the room, a cry or the noise of a fall without shuddering, and thinking that some fatal accident

dent had happened to them; did they walk out without me, and come in a little later than usual, the agitation I was in was inexpressible: in short, although they all have good health, I never scarcely passed a day without experiencing some frightful shock or cruel uneasiness. Since I know that Monsieur du Resnel is at Erneville, I am infinitely less afraid of physical accidents; but I cannot endure the idea of Léocadie's chagrin and profound melancholy; I could wish very sincerely, at this moment, that she loved me less; to know that she is suffering and unhappy is an affliction above my courage; and, indeed, you must not suppose that I write her plaintive letters concerning our absence; on the contrary, I say to her every thing that can console her, dispel her fears about me, and revive her strength. I prefer her knowing only half of my affection for her, to augmenting her grief by painting it to her such as it is.

Adieu,

Adieu, my friend; write me word whether that vile epidemical disease, the measles, still continues in your family; but though it had ceased, I should still wish that you would not see my children for three weeks; for, by seeing them sooner, you might communicate to them this disorder, since you have not only been in the tainted air, but you have also attended your worthy housekeeper and her daughter, during all their illness. You know whether I should have these fears for myself; but to have them for one's children will not appear to you a weakness. Adieu, my perfect friend; I will be punctual in giving you an account of our dear patient.

Pardon me, my angel, but if you write to Léocadie, I conjure you to steep your letters in vinegar before you send them to her, and to charge the bearer strictly not to set his foot in the castle; but to leave
the

the letters at the game-keeper's house. In short, I rely on you for every precaution of this kind.

Let me beg of you to send no novels to Mademoiselle du Rocher, nor any thing, without exception, that has not been steeped in vinegar.

LETTER LXXXIV.

From MADEMOISELLE DU ROCHER *to the*
MARCHIONESS.

June 9.

MADAM,

I HAVE this moment received the letter with which you honour me by your last messenger. La France is just arrived, and has performed all the journey without stopping. I shall punctually obey your orders, Madam. I shall, for an hour, steep in vinegar, all the Baroness de Vordac's letters that may be addressed to Mademoiselle Léocadie ; but I am very much concerned to see your uneasiness, Madam ; I ventured to expect more confidence from you.

Sylvestre

Sylvestre is very tractable ; every day Monsieur du Resnel gives him a lesson of history and geography, and also one of arithmetic. And then he plays with him at foot-ball and battledore and shuttlecock. Monsieur du Resnel has made Mademoiselle Léocadie a present of a charming collection of shells, and a folio book of engravings on the same subject ; and he explains to her all these things ; he also makes her repeat her lessons of botany and mineralogy. I assiduously go through all the *readings* prescribed by you, Madam ; I cannot but be well pleased with Mademoiselle Léocadie's application.

We go regularly every day to the parish church in order to offer up our prayers to God for the perfect recovery of the Countess ; as long as she was thought in danger, the church was never empty. Mademoiselle Léocadie and the little girls belonging to the school are now performing
ing

ing a nine day's devotion, as a thanksgiving.

Old Marie-Jeanne has been dying; Mademoiselle Léocadie nursed her very carefully; we ourselves made her broth. We, as usual, visit the other poor people who are all in good health.

The rector is very well, and comes almost every day to dine with us.

I am well satisfied with Mina; she has finished the pair of stockings and two shirts for the poor; Mademoiselle Léocadie still works with me at the baby-linen which is getting forward; the poor woman will not lie in these two months, and we shall have finished before that time.

Mademoiselle Léocadie has not yet resumed her usual appetite and gaiety; but she sleeps better, and she is not near so pale within these two days. Monsieur du Resnel's company is the greatest consolation, after that of writing to you, Madam, and receiving your letters.

La

La France wishes to set out again to-morrow at day-break ; this is the reason why we give him our letters to-night.

Make yourself easy, Madam, and be well assured that Sylvestre does *not run alone* by the side of the piece of water, that he does *not eat too much*, that the maids do *not give him, without my knowledge, tarts and cakes*, and that we do every thing in our power to divert the attention of Mademoiselle Léocadie.

I am, with respect, Madam, &c.

LETTER LXXXV.

*Anonymous from the unknown Mother to***LÉOCADIE.**

June 18.

My daughter! my dear Léocadie! I am in the neighbourhood where you reside! I am near you! I have not yet been able to perceive you; but I have seen Erneville castle! I have seen the wood in which you walk, and the favourite tree that bears your name! Alas! I cannot discover myself to you! I cannot! however, I wish to see you! Oh! procure this moment of happiness for the unfortunate woman who, for fifteen years past, has known of maternal love nothing but the anxieties and sorrows that it can occasion!

I ask secrecy of you for a short time only : two days after our appointment, you may reveal this secret to your benefactors ; from this time to that I require an absolute silence. Be to-morrow morning at five o'clock in the wood that is railed in ; I shall be there concealed in the hollow of your tree, certain that you will respect this asylum, and that you will not attempt to look into it : rest yourself on the turf-seat : there I shall see you ; there, for a few minutes, I shall be indemnified for all that I have suffered ! You will remain half an hour on the seat ; then you will return to the castle. I rely on an exact obedience ; and do you, my Léocadie ! rely on an inexpressible and unlimited affection !

THE END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

THE RIVALS' MOTHERS.

I like to see you for a short time only
and then after our separation you may
never see me to your regret. I am
so glad to hear I require no absolute
proof. Be so-morrow morning at five
o'clock in the world that is this
will be the first time in the history of
the world that a woman of your rank
will be seen in the world.



My dear Sir,
I have the honor to acknowledge
the receipt of your letter of the 10th
inst. and in reply to inform you
that the same has been forwarded
to the proper authorities for their
consideration. I am, Sir, very
truly, your obedient servant,
J. H. [Signature]

THE END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

